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VARIA: READINGS FROM RARE BOOKS

"And out of oldë books, in good faithe,
Cometh all this new science that men lerë."
Chaucer.

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From a Portrait preserved in the Vestry of St. Peter's, Mancroft, Norwich.

VARIA:

READINGS FROM RARE BOOKS.

BY J. HAIN FRISWELL,

AUTHOR OF "THE GENTLE LIFE," ETC.

LONDON:

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Charles Studley Marsh
August 1971.

TO MY FRIEND

G. W. W. FIRTH, Esq.

(OF NORWICH),

THIS VOLUME OF ESSAYS IS AFFECTIONATELY

AND ADMIRINGLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE indulgent reader will be kind enough to take the sub-title of these Bibliographic Essays in a somewhat restricted sense. The celebrated books discussed in them are widely known by name, but with the majority of them it is by name only. And to the general reader not only would their rarity be a hindrance to perusal, but, should he by chance procure them, the task of wading through the thick folios might be found tiresome or distasteful.

But here he may find something of great causes, men, and books, in a volume which he can carry to the chimney corner or read on a journey, something which it is hoped may induce him to seek after the treasures which lie hidden in the dusty and often but dimly-remembered originals.

The thanks of the author are due to the editors of the *Saturday Review* and the *Spectator*, in which these papers, which have had much added to them, first appeared, for permitting this reprint; to G. H. Lewes, Esq., Editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, for courteously withdrawing from his pages the title "Varia," which he had assumed long after the present work was advertised; and to Mr. Firth, who adorns the same profession as, and holds a like position to Sir Thomas Browne, and in the same city, for the photograph of a rare picture of that worthy knight, never before engraved, a reproduction of which illustrates this volume.

Few honest writers dismiss a book without sincerely wishing that it were worthier of the kind and judicious readers' time and study: an earnest expression of that wish shall close these few preliminary words.

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THE ANGELIC DOCTOR.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Summa Theologica, Sancti Thomæ Acquinatis Divinæ Voluntatis interpretis; Sacri Ordinis Prædicatorum. In qua ecclesiæ Catholicæ doctrina universa et quicquid in veterum Patrum monumentis est dignum observatu; quicquid etiam vel olim vocatum est, vel hodie vocatur ab hæreticis in controversiam; in omne ut erudite solide, et dilucide ita pie atque fideliter explicatur; in tres partes ab auctore suo distributa. Parisiis, M.D.C.XXXVIII.

Bulter's Lives of the Saints. Dolman, 1854, 12 vols. 8vo. vol. iii. 7th March. Article: S. Thomas of Aquino, D.C.

Penny Cyclopædia. Vol. xiii. Article: Aquinas.

An Historical and Critical Dictionary. By Monsieur Bayle. Vol. i. Article: Albertus Magnus; other articles have been consulted.

Mediæval Philosophy; or, a Treatise on Moral and Metaphysicæl Philosophy from the 5th to the 14th Centuries. By Frederick Denison Maurice, M.A. London and Glasgow, 1848.

Nouvelle Biographie Générale. Article: St. Thomas D. Aquin.

Philobiblon. By Richard de Bury, 1832. Notes to, on Aquinas.

Miscellaneous Works of Pope. London, 1741. Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, where a selection of theses is given in imitation of Aquinas's style.

THE ANGELIC DOCTOR.

A.D. 1227—1274.

THERE is a huge brown folio sometimes met with, nothing less than the celebrated "Summ" of Thomas Aquinas, which has been a perfect harbour of refuge for all Roman Catholic doubters ever since it was written, and which has had its effect on Protestant minds, and will yet do so, no doubt, for years to come. It contains somewhat more than eighteen hundred pages of closely-printed matter in double columns, and resolves, or affects to resolve—really, to say the truth, it is for the most part a very manly, plain-spoken book—all the doubts, ethical, philosophical, or religious, that a reader, be he priest or layman, can possibly entertain. This great work Aquinas did not live to finish; but, like the Cathedral of Cologne, or the Pyramid of Cheops, although unfinished, it is still a wonder. Mr. Maurice, in fact, believes that, if Aquinas had conceived and entertained only half the doubts that he has so boldly expressed, he would not have lived till he was thirty, much less till he

was nearly fifty. But these doubts never made a lodgment within his breast; and hence he was called the Angelic Doctor, as Bonaventura was named the Seraphic Doctor. He is full of calm consciousness of Faith. Those who rank him amongst the infidels, again to quote Mr. Maurice, can have but little acquaintance with his writings. Yet his book is a storehouse of infidel opinions. "The reasoner against almost any tenet of the Roman Catholic Church can be furnished on a short notice with any kind of weapon out of the armoury of the great Doctor."*

To return to our book. Infidel or not infidel, the Church has always regarded St. Thomas as one of its great doctors and champions; and the very copper-plate engraving which is inlaid in the title-page of my copy pictures what was at once almost a miracle and a conveyance to the Doctor of the applause and approval of his church. The Doctor is represented as kneeling in prayer, with his hands widely spread, and with a most humble expression of countenance; above him a little Cupid lifts from his studious brows his square doctor's cap, so that a nimbus, an aureole, a divine coronet of light, which, if we may believe artists, saints commonly wore, may have room to play, in a will-o'-the-wisp fashion, above his head. Before him, and in the midst of a large church of Palladian or Roman architecture, appears the Saviour, in clouds, in the midst of which clouds also are certain cherubic angels, mere heads and wings disporting. From the mouth of the

* Maurice's "Mediæval Philosophy."

Saviour issues a label, on which are the words of approval: "Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma;"—"Well hast thou written concerning mè, O Thomas." Perhaps the force of approval could no further go.

We shall have to refer to this legend in the life of the saint, and may therefore, without further parley, proceed to consider who this great writer was; this great bull, this ox, the bellowing of whose learning has reached down the ages and affects us yet.

The 7th of March is consecrated by the Roman Church to the memory of Saint Thomas of Aquino, doctor and confessor, by us known as Thomas Aquinas. Few men were more important in their day, and his reputation has not died out, but has been permanent and widely spread. The period to which he belonged was one of great mental activity; of an activity, not to say restlessness, indeed, much greater than many of the modern school would be disposed to allow. The first dawn of the Reformation had not yet, it is true, become manifest, but a spirit of inquiry was prevalent, which was the sure precursor of an intellectual revolution. To quote Lord Brougham, speaking of a totally distinct but somewhat similar period: "The soldier might be abroad, but there was another person abroad who would make himself heard; *yes! the schoolmaster was abroad;* and while he was busy, what cared we for soldiers?" The ancient philosophers and poets had again taken root in the human mind; Aristotle had been called the enemy of Christianity; Plato had been read, cited, and loved; the Bible itself had been, to the priests at least, if

not to the laity, unlocked. There was also a great latitude of speculation; and, although not a learned age in the sense in which we now use the term, it is probable that there was much more originality of thought, if less of scholarship, than in the succeeding century.

As before remarked, there was scarcely any formal opposition to the claims of the Roman Catholic Church. But the thirteenth century was not distinguished by any exaggerated spirit of submission. In England our own King John yielded reluctantly to the Papal claims—a measure to which he was forced rather by his own extreme unpopularity than by any excess of sympathy on the part of his subjects with the spiritual power.

In Germany the Swabian dynasty held the imperial crown for a long series of years, and the emperors of that family were engaged in constant strife with the court of Rome. Seldom had the person of the pontiff been viewed with less respect—seldom had he been hated so completely as a secular prince. The ecclesiastical power gained ascendency at last; and the death of the young Conradin, and the accession of the house of Anjou to the throne of Naples, completed the ruin of a dynasty fruitful in men of a restless and aspiring genius.

Thomas of Aquino had not, as Shiel once said, that bitter chill of poverty in early youth from which the heart so seldom recovers. He was by birth one of the counts of Aquino, who ranked among the noblest families of Naples. "They were allied," says Alban Butler, with a pride which is perhaps pardonable, but certainly unchristian, "to

the Kings of Sicily and Aragon, to St. Lewis of France, and many other sovereign houses of Europe. Our saint's grandfather having married the sister of the Emperor Frederick I, he was himself grand-nephew to that prince, and second cousin to the Emperor Henry VI, and in the third degree to Frederick II. His father, Landulph, was Count of Acquino, and Lord of Loretto and Belcastro: his mother, Theodora, was daughter to the Count of Theate. The saint was born towards the end of the year 1226, or at the beginning of the ensuing year; for accounts differ. St. Austin observes that the most tender age is subject to various passions, as of impatience, choler, jealousy, and spite, and the like, which appear in children. No such thing was seen in Thomas."*

With such a sweet disposition, it was perhaps impossible not to make a saint; with such a pedigree, so exalted a genealogy, it was very difficult to do so. The monastic life was the result of Thomas's own choice, but it was most vigorously opposed by all his family. The lustre of the long line of the Counts of Aquino was not, as they thought, to be dimmed by the dirty habits, the bare feet, and the serge gown of a priest. They little dreamed of the lustre that was to be shed upon it by the aureole of a saint.

In early life the education of the child had been intrusted to the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino. There is some dispute as to the share the Benedictines are

* Alban Butler's "Lives of the Saints," vol. iii. pp. 43, 44.

entitled to in having secured so brilliant and acute an intellect for the service of the Church; and, indeed, it would seem that he did not entirely determine to give up the world until he had resided some time at Naples; when, after the lapse of a short time, he entered the order of Saint Dominic.

This decisive step had been long opposed by the whole force of entreaty, persuasion, threat, trick, cajolery, and even force, of Aquinas's family. All manner of fond caresses, entreaties, and prayers were used by his mother to dissuade him from becoming a monk, and, says Butler, with a quaint sadness, "Nature made her eloquent and pathetic." His sisters, too, pleaded with her; they omitted nothing that flesh and blood could inspire on such an occasion, and represented to him the danger of causing the death of his mother by grief. But nothing could move Thomas; on the contrary, if we may credit his biographers, he rather moved his sisters than they him, for they both yielded to the force of his reasons for quitting the world, and by his persuasion devoted themselves to a sincere practice of piety.

In sweet solitude, Thomas prepared himself for his future life in company with three books, a Bible, Aristotle's Logics, and the works of the Master of the Sentences; this quietude, however, enraged his brothers Landulph and Reynold, who were young and somewhat wild men, soldiers who had returned from the army of the emperor, and they sought to obtain that by force which the mother had failed to gain by entreaties; they bore

away the young novice, tore up his habit, and shut him up in a solitary tower. Herein, like the philosopher of old, he was to undergo a strong temptation, and to succeed in overcoming it. But Alban Butler shall tell what this was: "The devil suggested to these young officers a new artifice to prevent him from pursuing his vocation. They secretly introduced into his chamber one of the most beautiful and most insinuating young strumpets of the country, promising her a considerable reward in case she could draw him into sin; she employed all the arms of Satan to succeed in so detestable a design. The saint, alarmed and affrighted at the danger, profoundly humbled himself, and cried out to God most earnestly for his protection; then snatching up a firebrand struck her with it and drove her out of his chamber. After this victory, not moved with pride, but blushing with confusion at having been so basely assaulted, he fell on his knees and thanked God for his merciful preservation."

The story would hardly be complete without a vision. Falling asleep, he dreamt that two angels tied him round the loins with a cord, or, if we like it better, two angels did really visit him, and girded him so tightly with a cord that they awakened him and made him cry out. His guards ran in, but he kept the secret to himself. One heroic victory of this kind, adds Butler, sometimes obtains of God a recompense and a triumph. As St. Paul was let down from the city walls in a basket, so was Thomas from his tower by his sister, who knew that his mother, the countess, no longer opposed his being a monk. He

was received with joy by his brethren the Dominicans of Naples, and from that time he was suffered to pursue his desires in peace.

Albertus Magnus was then teaching at Cologne, and the two orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic were as yet in the full vigour of youth. Almost every man of intellect was in that day a priest, although perhaps only a priest in name; and one cannot wonder at the unremitting watchfulness and care with which his future career was marked out by the chiefs of this powerful spiritual corporation.

The Benedictines, however, are no doubt entitled to some credit in forming the mind of the youthful aspirant. His biographers are never weary of boasting how pious and how modest he was from the time of his earliest youth. His great talent and gentle disposition seem to have attracted considerable notice, and no pains were probably spared to secure such abilities for the service of the Church.

Be this as it may, St. Thomas of Aquino has been always recognized as one of the glories of the Dominican order. Under the care of the general of this order, he was sent to Paris, and from Paris to Cologne; there he first listened to Albert the Great, a man small in stature and weak in body, but great indeed in mind. He ranked amongst the most learned men of the age, and was endowed with a wonderful vivacity and quickness of intellect. Like most of the learned of his day, he attempted to reach the extreme limits of the knowable, and to him was attached, in the minds of the vulgar at least, the credit of being a magician.

"I could easily believe," says Bayle, speaking of this charge, "that, as he understood mathematics, he had made a head the springs whereof might form some articulate sounds; but what a folly to found an accusation of magic on this!"* Polydore Vergil, Pope Sylvester, Robert of Lincoln, and Friar Bacon had like heads. Naudé tells us that Albertus Magnus was more ingenious than these people; for he formed a whole man, having worked for thrice ten years with the greatest diligence to forge him under the divers constellations, which the credulous reader, if he look into Old Moore's or Zadkiel's almanacs of the present day, will find govern the various parts of the body. Some of the writers of the time say that this man was made of flesh,† but by art, and not by nature; a fact "judged impossible by modern writers." It was called the *Androïs* of Albertus Magnus; and the tale is only introduced here because it is said, to his honour, that Thomas Aquinas broke it in pieces, he being, we are told, "irritated at its great tittle-tattle." If any such figure did exist, more probably he did so from a belief that such an image was wickedly imagined and made. Albertus was accused of turning winter into spring, of possessing magical books, of being the first man-midwife, and, by certain magical performances, of preserving his own body from corruption. In a note Bayle quotes Father Raynaud, who asserts that St. Thomas never said that he broke the

* Bayle's Dictionary, article "Albertus Magnus."

† Bayle quotes Henri de Assia and Bartholomew Sybilla.

brazen head of Albertus, and that the asserted miracles are false exaggerations or wholly fictitious.*

Aquinas was, if not the favourite, the most celebrated scholar of Albertus; but, as Alban Butler tells us, his humility prevented him from showing how really advanced he was in learning. His fellow-scholars called him the Great Sicilian, the Dumb Ox. One day, however, the master observed, in the hearing of all, "We call him the great Sicilian ox, but that ox will make his lowings heard throughout Christendom." It is also said that one of his companions proposed, out of pity to his supposed incapacity, to go over his lessons and explain them to him. The saint submitted, through meekness, to this arrangement. It happened one day, however, that his friend found something which he was unable to understand, much less to explain. Thomas solved the difficulty in the most lucid manner, and his fellow-student henceforward was content to learn from him. This story seems to accord with what we know of his character. Every allowance must be made for the tendency of ecclesiastical biographers to magnify the virtues of the spiritual hero whose character they are depicting. But, after making every possible deduction for party-spirit, enough remains to render it doubtful whether any of the doctors of the Reformed Church were actuated at any time by a more

* Hyems in veris amœnitatem versa et caput æneum articulate loquens . . . sunt ableganda tanquam conficta et falso jactata de tanto viro; libri autem magicii sunt suppositii, &c.

Christian spirit than that which inspired the Dominican monk, of whose life and works we are endeavouring to give some brief notice.

His master, Albertus Magnus, was a man of very different character. He was less of a theologian, and more of a philosopher. Some hints were occasionally thrown out, even in his lifetime, that he was an ardent student of the occult sciences. Being associated with the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, for so many years, he doubtless exercised great influence in the development of his young friend's character, and this, perhaps, would account for many of the doubts expressed in Aquinas's great work. He survived his pupil seven years.

A legend which was current concerning Albertus Magnus shows how widely he differed from the Angelic Doctor. Many years before his death he refrained from teaching. The reason for this was given in this wise: "When young, he had a difficulty even in mastering the most elementary studies necessary for the ecclesiastical profession. He was almost in despair, when the Holy Virgin appeared to him and asked him in which branch of learning he most wished to excel,—in theology or in philosophy. Albert made choice of philosophy. His request was granted; but the Virgin added that, as a punishment for not choosing theology, before his death he would relapse into his former stupidity. This accordingly happened three years before his death. He suddenly stopped short while he was delivering a lecture, and, being unable to collect his ideas, he at length under-

stood that the time had arrived when the prediction should be fulfilled."

This story is probably fabulous; we quote it to show that, in the opinion of his age, Albertus Magnus was less a theologian than a philosopher. It was perhaps fortunate for his pupil that such happened to be the case.

Thomas Aquinas was of a devout disposition, and had even some tendency to mysticism. It is probable that his reasoning powers would scarcely have been so fully developed as they were, if he had not had a preceptor rather more secular in his inclinations than himself.

After a few years Albertus Magnus was summoned to Paris, and his disciple Thomas accompanied him. In 1248 the Dominican order resolved to establish theological seminaries in various parts of Europe. Four of these were, Cologne, Montpellier, Bologna, and Oxford. Albertus Magnus was appointed to a professorship at Cologne, and Thomas Aquinas, being then twenty-two years of age, was also intrusted with the office of teacher. He now began to compose his first works, which consisted of commentaries on the Ethics, and other philosophical works, of Aristotle. About this time he appears to have been subject to fits of religious enthusiasm. In saying mass, according to Alban Butler, he seemed to be in raptures, and often quite dissolved in tears.

It is therefore perhaps to this period of his life that we must assign the occasion of the miraculous vision which is illustrated, in the manner already described, on the title-

page of the folio edition of the "Summa Theologica." It should be premised, Tocco relates, according to Butler, that the vision took place somewhat later in the saint's life, when, indeed, he was at Naples, after having composed the first part of his "Summa Theologica" at Bologna; certain it is, however, that, during the rapt and visionary state into which fervent prayer frequently threw this good man, Dominick Caserte "beheld him, while in fervent prayer, raised from the ground, and heard a voice from the crucifix directed to him in these words, 'Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma: quam mercedem accipies?' 'Non aliam, nisi te, Domine.'—'Well hast thou written of me, O Thomas: what reward wilt thou accept?' 'No other than thyself, O Lord,' said the devoted priest." Taking the story at its lowest possible value, and believing that, like the Egyptian priests, which Alban Butler tells his readers addressed their devotees from hollow cells made secretly behind the images, the priests at Naples imposed upon their devout and learned dupe in order to encourage him in his wonderful undertaking, we still must admire the sweet devotion and meekness of the rapt answer.

In 1257, being then thirty-one years old, Aquinas was admitted Doctor at Paris. It had in the meantime not gone well with his family. The two young soldiers who had played the saint so scurvy a trick had become sincere penitents, and had left the emperor's service, who, in revenge, burnt Aquino and put Reynold, the younger of the two, to death, in the year 1250. After Aquinas was admitted doctor, the professors of the University of Paris,

then disputing about that for which their present successors would care very little, determined, in the year 1258, to consult Aquinas upon the ticklish point "of the accidents remaining really, or only in appearance, in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar." The young Doctor, not puffed up by such an honour, wrote the treatise still extant, and laid it on the altar. While the saint remained in prayer on this occasion, some of his brethren saw him lifted up from the ground."*

It is probable that while at Paris the whole mind of Aquinas, not given to devotion, was concentrated on his great book, the "Summa Theologica." There is a good story told of the simplicity of the man, the absence of mind of the scholar, and the fervour of the saint. The King of France, St. Lewis, had so great an esteem for the young Doctor that he often invited him to his table, and moreover consulted him in his affairs of state. Butler is careful to tell us that the saint avoided the honour of dining with the king as often as he could, and that when obliged to be at court, "appeared there as *recollected* (collected?) as if in the convent." One day, dining with St. Lewis, the Doctor, with an energetic and triumphant movement, cried out, "Conclusum est contra Manichæos;" "It is conclusively against the Manichees." The prior of the convent, astonished at these words, bade the priest be still, and remember where he was. The good king, however, fearful that the world might lose so valuable an

* Alban Butler, "Lives of the Saints," vol. iii. p. 53.

argument—for the Manichees were not overthrown every day—begged the saint to write it down, or, indeed, according to Tocco, caused his secretary to write it down for him.

Rabelais, who in every story seized at once the point most open to ridicule, alludes to one regarding Aquinas, which Duchat supplies in the notes to the chapter (Pantagruel, book iii. chap. 2) where the allusion occurs. Panurge delivers a lecture upon the wisdom of eating green corn; that is, of spending one's revenue before it is due. "I may very justly say of you, as Cato did of Albidius, who, after he had by a most extravagant expense wasted all his goods but one house, fairly set it on fire, that the better he might cry, *Consummatum est!* Even as since his time St. Thomas Aquinas did when he had eaten up the whole lamprey, although there was no necessity for it." This lamprey story arose from an incident at the table of St. Lewis. Thomas Aquinas was thereto invited. For the king there was served up a fine lamprey; and, says Duchat, "Thomas, whom it seems no other time but that would serve to compose his hymn on the Holy Sacrament, had, at the profoundness of his meditation, eaten up the whole of the lamprey, which was designed for the king, and had made an end of this hymn and the fish both together. Thomas, overjoyed at having finished so elaborate a poem, cried out in an ecstasy, *Consummatum est!* 'It is finished!' The company who had seen Thomas play a good knife, and lay about him to some tune, but knew nothing of his mental employment, fancied that these Latin words related to his gallant performance in demolish-

ing the lamprey, and looked upon him as a very profane person for applying to a piece of unmannerly epicurism the words which each of them knew to be spoken by our Saviour when expiring on the cross."*

There is yet another story equally good, and indeed, to a Protestant mind, more pregnant, which it is needless to say Alban Butler does not relate. One day, when the learned and saintly doctor was conversing with Pope Innocent IV, that Pontiff, on some money being brought in, probably some large sum which excited the Pope's pride, said, "You see that age of the Church is past, when she could say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "Yes, holy father," answered Aquinas; "and the day is also past when she could say to the paralytic, 'Take up thy bed, and walk.'"

Aquinas seems to have been the acknowledged chief of his party and age. Whatever he did, he did well. He wrote in verse as well as in prose; and some of the hymns yet sung in the Romish Church are by him. His works were numerous. His commentary on the four books of Peter Lombard, commonly called the Master of Sentences, is well known. As the claim of Thomas à Kempis to the authorship of the "Imitatio Christi" is disputed, and indeed with great reason, so, perhaps with much less reason, is the claim of Aquinas to the authorship of the "Summa Theologica." But there is no doubt that the theological opinions of that work were his; and perhaps the

* Duchat, Notes to Rabelais' works. Translated by Sir Thomas Urquhart and Motteux.

most important and most memorable of them is the saint's assertion of the supreme and irresistible efficacy of the Divine Grace. This doctrine, surely a biblical one, or, as our modern phraseology would have it, an evangelical one, was violently opposed by Duns Scotus; and the followers of the two teachers disputed amongst themselves for ages, and do in fact dispute now, being ranked under the names of their respective leaders as *Thomists* and *Scotists*.

In the year 1265 Pope Clement IV became head of the Church; but this event produced no change in the regard shown by the Sovereign Pontiff for, or in the position of, Aquinas. The new Pope was a man distinguished by great conscientiousness, if we may judge from a letter written to one of his relations on his accession to the Papal chair; and one of his first acts was to offer to Aquinas the Archbishopric of Naples.

In 1269 Aquinas returned to Paris, but was soon persuaded to revisit Italy, which he never again quitted. The Swabian dynasty had received its death-blow. The young Conradin had been executed on a public scaffold, in view of his own subjects and those of his family, and the fortunes of the house of Aquino were in the ascendant. Charles of Anjou had little mildness or devotion in his character, and could have had but little sympathy with a student and a devotee. He made, however, urgent entreaties that Aquinas should return to Italy, and he, probably influenced by his family, took up his final abode at Naples.

It was not, however, for long; hard study and incessant

labour, such as must have been undertaken to produce only one work out of many, the "Summa Theologica," had their natural effect upon the ascetic workman, which was probably hastened by devotional austerities. Not only was Aquinas a saint in his book and with his pen, but, not content with such work, with his voice and preaching he persuaded many. So earnest was he that the tears of the auditory flowed so abundantly that the preacher oftentimes was obliged to halt for awhile in his discourse. Nor did the wonders of the saint stop at mere oracular persuasion. William of Tocco, who relates that in his prayer Aquinas was lifted from earth, tells us that, as he one Sunday came from church, a woman touching merely the edge of his garment was cured. Two Rabbins were converted miraculously; disputing with them one day, and agreeing to resume the argument on the morrow, Aquinas spent the night at the foot of the altar. The next morning his two most obstinate opponents came, not again to dispute, but to embrace the faith of which their interlocutor was so ardent a defender. In the year 1263, Aquinas had assisted at the fortieth general chapter of the Dominicans in London, and soon after had solicited and obtained his dismissal from teaching, rejoicing inwardly to be once more a private religious man.

From the sixth day of December, 1273, to that of his death, the seventh of March following, Aquinas acted as one with whom the world had passed away. He neither wrote nor dictated anything, but gave himself up entirely to private meditation. Pope Gregory X having called a

general council, with the double purpose of extinguishing the Greek schism and raising succours to defend the Holy Land against the Saracens, a brief was directed to Aquinas ordering him to defend the faith against the Greek schismatics. But this was not to be. The council was appointed to meet on the 1st of May, 1274, at Lyons, and the ambassadors of Michael Palæologus, with the Greek prelates, were to be present. Aquinas, sick in body, set out on his journey, but was forced to stop at Fossa Nuova, a famous Cistercian abbey in the diocese of Terracina. Here, practising austerities which neither reason nor faith could demand in one over-pressed with fever, he prepared to die. As he was carried into the cloister whence he never went alive, he repeated part of the 131st Psalm,—"This is my rest for ages without end;" and he had continually on his lips a pious sentence from the Confessions of St. Augustine, wherein that saint professes his hunger for heaven and the Lord. The monks begged the Angelic Doctor to dictate an exposition of the Canticles in imitation of St. Bernard. "Give me," said he, "but St. Bernard's spirit, and I will obey." He commenced, however, wearied out by the importunities of the monks, an exposition of "that most mysterious of all the divine books," the Canticles, but halted after a few lines, too weak to proceed any further.

After having received absolution most piously, he desired the viaticum, and, to receive it, begged to be taken off his bed and laid in ashes on the floor. Then, in tears, and with the most tender devotion, he received the sacraments

and stammered out his belief. His last words, after thanks to the abbot and brethren, were in answer to the question "How one might always live faithful to God's grace." "Rest assured," said he, "that he who will always walk faithfully in His presence, always ready to give Him an account of his actions, shall never be separated from Him by consenting to sin."

After this came upon him the change we must all undergo; he died in his forty-eighth year. He is described as a tall, well-proportioned man, active and of great endurance. His literary labour was immense; not only are his works full of much thought, but they are so vast that they extend to nineteen folio volumes compactly printed. The "Summa Theologica" alone is a work which is astounding to contemplate. Aquinas, a learned theological chief justice, hears the pros and cons, and pronounces judgment upon everything. His book is the great court of conscience, into which everything is brought. It resembles in some fashion Jeremy Taylor's "Ductor Dubitantium," but is written with much more boldness and less doubt. Aquinas never shuns anything; it is true that he always sums up favourably to religion, morality, and the Holy Roman Catholic Church: but there is no getting into holes and corners, and very little paltering with the truth. There is no doubt about the mind of the Angelic Doctor: what he says he means and believes; and the chances are that he made those who read him believe with him.

It seems somewhat curious that Bishop Taylor did not refer to the work of Aquinas, in the preface to his

"Ductor Dubitantium," or the "Rule of Conscience in all her general measures, serving as a great instrument for the determination of cases of conscience"—a work dedicated, by the way, to one to whom it should have been of use, Charles II. But, though the two works provoke a remembrance of each other, they are, in reality, very different. "Some of the Lutherans," says Taylor, "have indeed done something of this kind, which is well; Balduinus, Bidenbachius, Dedekanus, König, and the abbreviator of Gerard. But yet one needs remain, and we cannot be well supplied out of the Roman storehouses; for, though there the staple is, and very many excellent things exposed to view, yet we have found the merchants to be deceivers, and the wares too often falsified."*

He then quotes from Emanuel Sa, and remarks that the Romanists do up "so many boxes of poyson in their repositories under the same paintings and specious titles, that few can distinguish ministeries of health from those of death—for who can safely trust the guide that tells him 'that it is no deadly thing to steal,'† or privately to take a thing that is not great from one's father?" But the Romanists had made a great advance in casuistry from the days of simple Thomas Aquinas, who for the most part palters not nor deceiveth. Nor is the golden-mouthed preacher, the sweet Shakespeare of divines, himself free from too much casuistry. There is something

* Preface to "Ductor Dubitantium," 3rd edition, 1665.

† Emanuel Sa, Aphor. V. Furtum.

about lying in his cases of conscience which might be advantageous to a lawyer or to a careless witness, but would surely be condemned by the judge. Equivocation, which our copy-books have long told us "is the worst of lies," Taylor tells us "may be allowed for great charity," and is then "only a crime when it is against justice and charity" —that is, he allows it. Certain it is, however, that we condone Taylor's offence when he tells us his stories; how one man, a Greek, saved his brother by saying he lay οὗ τῇ ὕλῃ, "somewhere in the wood," when he had hid him under a wood-pile, and of another, Titius, father of Caius, who concealed his father in a tub, and told the cut-throats that *patrem in doliolo lateri*, the Latin for a little tub, meaning also a hill near Rome.* But if a man has a right to ask such questions, such as a magistrate, says our Ductor, we have no right to answer him ambiguously. Thus, if the magistrate asks if Titius be at home, we have no right to say *Titius non est domi*, the *est* leading to the inference Titius does not eat at home, using the word in a right sense, but in a sense less common. The bishop relates with great indignation also that story of a Spanish governor who promised a lady to give her her husband if she would submit to his desires. But, these obtained, the governor gives the husband indeed, but only his dead body newly slain. The lady complains, and tells her misfortune to Gonzaga, the Spanish general, who, finding it to be true, makes the governor marry the lady, that she

* "Ductor Dubitantium," bk. iii. chap. 2, p. 500.

might be recompensed by his estate, and then the same day causes the governor to lose his head, to pay, says the bishop, "for his dishonourable falsehood and bloudy lie. It was a justice worthy of a great prince; and the reward was justly paid to such cruel equivocation."*

Leaving this disquisition, for which the story cited by Taylor from worthy John Chokier it is hoped will make amends, it may be as well to give the reader a specimen of Aquinas's work. It is one memorable and valuable for having survived countless mutations, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, and which really deserves the honour in which so many ages and scholars of such varied shades of faith have held it in. The "Summa Theologica" was, according to the author's own statement, written chiefly for the instruction of young students of theology. It was adopted by the Church of Rome as a text-book, and from the first considered to be a most masterly exposition of theology. How little the lapse of centuries has diminished its reputation the following statement will show.

The "Summa" has never been a scarce book; in one form or another it can at any time be purchased for a moderate sum. The editions in one volume, folio, are perhaps the most common, but they are not we believe so old as those in five or six, large duodecimo. This form, however, is of little value in the eyes of the book-hunter. The first edition of the entire works of Thomas Aquinas was published at Rome, in 19 folio volumes, in 1570-71. This contains the

* "Ductor Dubitantium," bk. iii. chap. 2, p. 502.

only complete collection of his works. Portions of the "Summa" had been published long previously, but were usually sold at a high price. The best edition of the "Summa Theologica" is that published at Rome (1773). It is beautifully printed, and, besides other matter, contains the commentaries of the celebrated Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan. A very pretty edition of the work has been lately published at Parma. In 1851-4 a translation was brought out by the Abbé Drioux. It seems to be very well executed, and has the formal commendations of his ecclesiastical superiors. Another version is in progress. It is well also to observe that a work entitled, "Summa, Sancti Thomæ hodiernis Academiarum moribus accommodata sive Cursus Theologiæ juxta mentem Divi Thomæ," has passed through several editions. I do not know what amount of circulation this work has enjoyed, or what amount of reputation it possesses. The fact of its having passed through several editions shows that it must possess some merit.

Professor Maurice gives, in his "Mediæval Philosophy," an elaborate analysis of the character rather than the contents of the "Summa," which latter really could not be well done in modern books, since it requires five elaborate indexes to direct the reader to the various questions; but Professor Maurice's aim is so different from that of the present writer, that he cannot quote from his work with advantage, or he would rather avail himself of the words of so careful a scholar than of his own. Let us take, therefore, the first question St. Thomas treats of; it will show his boldness, and serve us as well as any other.

"THE FIRST QUESTION.

Of the holy doctrine; what it is and how far it extends: divided into ten articles.

And as our intention is bounded within certain limits, it is first necessary to investigate the holy doctrine, what it is, and how far it does extend, about which there are these ten queries:—

¶ Primo, on the necessity of this doctrine.
¶ Secundo, whether it be a science.
¶ Tertio, whether it be one or many.
¶ Quarto, whether it be speculative or practical.
¶ Quinto, its comparison with other sciences.
¶ Sexto, whether it be wisdom.
¶ Septimo, whether God be its subject.
¶ Octavo, whether it be argumentative.
¶ Nono, whether it ought to be treated metaphorically or symbolically.
¶ Whether the Holy Scriptures are to be expounded according to the many meanings (*plures sensus*) of this doctrine."

Taking up this, which very fitly opens his book, but of which modern readers who take the Bible as their guide will not care to know much, Aquinas puts his case, *ad primum*, to the first I answer; then in another paragraph he adds, *præterea*, moreover there is such and such to be said; next he puts the contrary, and very fairly too, *sed contra est;* and finally he sums up under the title *Conclusio*. Each sentence he commences with, *Respondeo dicendum*, I answer that it must be held. In his third article,

whether there be a God, *Utrum Deus sit*, he is very bold; nor is he less so when he takes up the question whether there be a soul, *An sit anima*. Indeed, this absorbing, wonderful question he chases up and down and into all sorts of holes and corners, proves that the soul is *not* of the body, triumphs over the Sadducees, and, in short, is in no way to be confounded with that scholar of our early dramatist,* who, after puzzling all night as to his soul's being, knew as little of it as his dog:—

> "——————— Still my spaniel slept,
> And still I held converse with Zabarell,
> Aquinas, Scotus, and the musty saw
> Of Antick Donate: still my spaniel slept.
> Still on I went, first *an sit anima;*
> Then, as it were mortal. O hold, hold; at that
> They're at brain buffets, fell by the ears amain
> Pell mell together; still my spaniel slept.
> Then whether it were corporal, or local, fixt,
> *Ex traduce*, but whether 't had free will
> Or no; hot philosophers
> Stood banding factions, all so strongly propt,
> I staggered, knew not which was former part,
> But thought, quoted, read, observed, and pried,
> Stuft noting books: and still my spaniel slept.
> At length he wak'd and yawn'd; and by yon sky,
> For aught I know, he knew as much as I."

Had the scholar held, as he affirms, much converse with Aquinas, his doubts as to that knotty point, a point which Moses himself leaves untouched, would surely have been solved. For a careful reader of the "Summa" will agree

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* John Marston, author of the "Malcontent," &c.

that the verdict of Mr. Maurice is not overrated. "So long," says that acute writer, "as we meet Aquinas on his own ground he is invincible. When you pass from him to the actual tumult of the conscience, and to the living facts of Scripture which respond to them, you are inclined to pronounce him utterly feeble."*

Scarcely should we say utterly feeble, although the doctrine of the schools may be weak beside the after-experience of life, or the teachings of the Bible. Aquinas does not shirk anything, as we have before hinted. Let us take, for example, Mr. Maurice's own account of his manner of treating the natural and human questions which occur to us all concerning the power of God. There are seven articles in the first question on the nature of this power. "The third of these is, and it begs the question which Hume denied, that of miracles, thus; whether those things which are impossible to nature are possible to God?" Aquinas gives nine reasons for the negative opinion. The first is, that, since God is the mover of nature, he cannot act contrary to nature. The second is, that the *first* principle in all demonstration, that affirmatives and negatives are not true, at the same time applies to nature, and that God *cannot* cause a negative and an affirmative to be true at the same time. The third article is very like the second: there are two principles subject to God—reason and nature; but God cannot do anything which is impossible to reason, therefore he cannot do anything which is

* Maurice's "Mediæval Philosophy."

in itself impossible to nature. The fourth is that what the false and the true are to knowledge, the possible and the impossible are to work; but that which is false in nature God cannot know, therefore what is impossible in nature God cannot work. The fifth is more noble, and perhaps more quibbling: what is proved of any one thing is proved of *all* similar things; as, if it is demonstrated of one triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles, that is true of all. But there is an impossibility in God, to wit, that he should be able to do a thing, and *not* be able to do a thing; therefore, if there is some impossibility in nature which he cannot do, it would seem that he can do no impossibility. In support of this follow nine reasons, the ninth resting on quotations from Jerome, Augustine, and Aristotle.

Then there are eight reasons on the other side; and lastly, the Doctor himself appears. He has in this case to reply both to the defendant's counsel and to the plaintiff's, and he does this with the utmost skill, and finally delivers a verdict from which the most orthodox will not dissent. All subjects he deals with in the same way, with great brevity, force, and conciseness. Let us now take one whole article as a specimen of the manner in which he deals with a question which has perhaps caused more bloodshed in, and scandal against, the Roman Church than any other.

"ARTICLE VIII.

Whether infidels are to be compelled to embrace the faith.

We now proceed to the eighth article.* It may be seen that infidels are by no means to be forced to embrace the faith. For we are told in the thirteenth of Matthew† that there was a certain husbandman"—(here, by the way, rendered by the word made so familiar by *Punch*, *pater-familias*), "in whose fields there were tares sown, and they sought of him, saying, 'Whether shall we go and gather them?' and he answered, 'No! lest by chance, as ye gather the tares, ye should also pull up the wheat.' And hereon, says Chrysostom, these things saith the Lord, prohibiting us to slay others. Nor is it right to slay heretics, because, if you kill them, many of the faithful saints (*sanctorum*) must also be overthrown; therefore it seemeth, by a like reasoning, that the infidels are by no means to be compelled to embrace the faith.

¶ 2. Moreover, in the Decretals (dis. 45, c. De Judæis) it is said, the Holy Synod has thus taught concerning the Jews, that none shall henceforward be brought to belief by force. Therefore, by a parity of reason, no other infidels are to be forced to believe.

¶ 3. Moreover, Augustin saith that no unwilling man

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* That is, of a series of questions all relating to the unfaithful, *ad infideles*; thus Art. VII. is whether one may dispute publicly with infidels? Art. V. whether there be many kinds of infidelity?

† Matt. xiii. 24, *et seq.*

is able to believe, unless he first become willing; but it is not possible to force the will; therefore infidels are not to be forced to believe.

¶ 4. Moreover, Ezekiel xviii. saith, speaking as if he were God (*ex personâ Dei*), 'I do not wish the death of a sinner;' and we ought, as we have before said, to conform our will to the Divine will, therefore *we* ought not to wish that infidels should be killed.

BUT, OPPOSED TO THIS, it is said, Luke xiv: 'Go out into the highways and lanes, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled;' now men, into the house of God, that is, into his Holy Church, enter by faith. Therefore, some are to be compelled to embrace the faith.

CONCLUSION.

Infidels who have never embraced the faith, such as Jews and Gentiles, are by no means to be compelled to do so; heretics and apostates are to be compelled, so that they may fulfil what they have promised.

I ANSWER that it must be said that there are certain of the infidels who have never embraced the faith, and are by no means to be forced to do so, because to believe is an action of the will, yet they are to be compelled by the faithful if they have the means of doing so (*si adsit facultas*), that they hinder not the faith, either by blasphemy or false persuasion, or by open persecution. And it is on this account that the faithful soldiers of Christ often carry on war against the infidels, not indeed that they should

compel them to believe (for when they have subdued them and hold them captive, they leave them free to believe or not), but on this account, that they may force them not to hinder the propagation of the faith of Christ. Some, indeed, are truly infidels who, when they have embraced the faith, profess it merely as heretics and some as apostates, and these are indeed bodily to be forced and compelled, that they may fulfil what they have promised, and renew that which they once undertook."

Then follow four paragraphs, headed, "Ad Primum," "Ad Secundum," &c, in which the same reasoning is represented and insisted on. In the fourth and last the Angelic Doctor shows that Holy Mother Church, although she can be meek as a brooding dove to her golden couplets, also holds in her hand concealed thunder, ready to be launched at the heretics. "Ad Quartum. Since in the same epistle Augustin saith [he has just quoted the 48th epistle of Augustin], 'Not one of us wishes any of the heretics to perish; but as the house of David could not have peace unless his son Absalom was slain in that war which he carried on against his father, so the Catholic Church, if she draws together a remnant (*cæteros aliquorum*) for perdition, soothes the grief of her maternal heart by the salvation of so many people.'" (2nd part of Part Second of the Summa, quest. 10, art. viii.)

Almost every question taken up by Aquinas is of intense interest. Some of them, perhaps, seem to modern ears to be mere blasphemies, such is their plainness; but the Angel of the Schools smoothes away difficulties, and generally

manages to decide rightly. Thus, in the second article of the seventy-ninth question of his first part, he debates "Whether the act of sinning comes from God"—that is, in plainer language, whether God be guilty of sin. Of course he concludes that God is guiltless; but he says that the will of God is the cause of the act of sinning (*ergo voluntas Dei est causa actus peccati*); and he sums up that the transgressor's act is necessary to God, *but the defect is in the thing created.* The whole of the question trenches upon the most delicate grounds, for which the utmost tact—and it is but fair to say that Aquinas has shown this—is necessary to prevent the writer from committing himself. The question is on the outward causes of sin; and here the boldness of the faith of Aquinas, who, believing utterly and without doubt in the power of God, yet dared to impute to him evil, is much to be admired. He divides the causes of sin into four articles—first, from God; secondly, from the devil; thirdly, from man.

"*Et primò*, ex parte Dei. Secundò, ex parte Diaboli. Tertio, ex parte hominis."

And upon this he builds four questions:—

"¶ Primò, whether God be the cause of sin?

¶ Secundò, whether the sinful act be from God?

¶ Tertiò, whether God be the cause of blindness and hardness of heart.

¶ Quartò, whether these things be ordained for the salvation of those who are blind and hard-hearted."

Let us turn to a less troublesome question. The Angelic Doctor seems to have thought woman inferior to man, and

adopted, says Bayle, in a note on Dr. Simon Gediccus, Aristotle's opinion: "Hanc opinionem adoptavit Thomas," part I, quest. 92, art. and lib. 3, c. *gentes;* but he was not rude enough to deny with the Italian cited by Bayle that women have no souls—*che le donne non habbino anima*—which the author, says the compiler of the "Historical Dictionary," endeavours to prove by several passages of the Holy Scriptures, and which he adapts to his fancy. As long as this book was printed only in Latin the Inquisition was silent; but as soon as it was translated into Italian, they censured and prohibited it. On this opinion the ladies of Italy put a various construction. Some were sorry for having no souls, and for being ranked so much below men, who, for the future, would use them little better than beasts. Others seemed to be indifferent about the matter, and to look upon themselves as mere machines, designed to move their wheels so well as to make the men mad.*

Of course the great bulk of the "Summa" concerns religion and the soul. Theology is the very atmosphere which is necessary for the existence of the Angel of the Schools; but every now and then the thoughts seem more modern, and he debates subjects in a way somewhat similar to our modern essayists, treating of matters which concern the heart and mind. Thus the rules Aquinas lays down for the cultivation of memory are very good. The first is that we

* Bayle, An Historical and Critical Dictionary. Article, Gediccus, p. 1394.

are to call up some images, *simulacra*, or likenesses of the things we wish to remember, which are not to be too familiar, because those which are rarer excite our admiration the more, and the mind therefore dwells on them more fixedly. This, the Angelic Doctor would have it, is the reason we remember the things of our boyhood so well, and hence he places the seat of memory in the sensitive part of our nature. The second act he tells us is to dispose of the things we wish to remember in order, so that one may easily suggest another. The third rule he gives us is to connect the things we wish to remember with our affections, so that in very deed, as Mr. Maurice has it, we may learn by heart. The fourth is that we are frequently to think and meditate on them, so that they should become habits of our mind, and a part of its very nature.

Aquinas's treatment of hatred is thoughtful and philosophical, and would afford more than a hint to more rapid, and sometimes rabid, penmen, who think too little and who write too much. He asks six questions about it:—1st. Whether the cause and object of hatred be evil. 2nd. Whether hatred be caused by love. 3rd. Whether hatred be stronger than love. 4th. Whether anybody can truly hate himself. 5th. Whether anybody can possibly hate the truth. 6th. Whether anybody can have a universal and general hatred of everything and everybody. He sums up that hatred can be caused by love, although he gives three reasons against it, and says, "Therefore love is not the cause of love;" but immediately afterwards follow the stern words:—

"Sed contra est that which Augustin saith in the 14th book, 'De Civitate Dei,' that all affections spring from love. Therefore even hatred, when it is a certain affection of the mind, is caused by love." A verdict we feel disposed to agree with, hatred being often perverted love; and certainly the hatred which Dr. Johnson, who loved a good hater, entertained against John Wilkes, sprang from the very love and deep reverence which Johnson bore to those things which Wilkes ridiculed and tried to harm.

Looked at through the dim vista of six centuries, the life and works of Thomas Aquinas are whole, sound, and beautiful. Such a dedication of a soul to God one sees but rarely; so great a faith, so sweet a humility, perhaps even more rarely still. Beautiful are his unwavering faith and devotion and his manly ever-present courage. He had devoted his mind early to the Church, and he served her faithfully. Not without reason has his Church ranked him among her saints and holy men; not unworthily does the Anglican Church bestow on him the title of learned. Sweet is it too, when ambition and gold, trade, place, title, and position, or even the tinkling of a literary name, have so large a share of the worship of the world, to turn to one who sat with kings as a simple monk, rapt in the questions of divinity or of the schools, unheeding the present pomp and ceremony, as well as the heavier and more substantial rewards of riches or of power.

It would be idle to imagine that, in these days of rapid thinking and reading, many could be found who would sit

down to study the works which are here glanced at. But enough, perhaps, has been done to show that the scholar whose mind is engrossed in other pursuits may find much instruction and some amusement from an occasional perusal of a question or two as argued out by St. Thomas. Compared with other writers, his style may be considered pleasant; and, although the phraseology of the schools is of course frequently introduced, yet, bearing in mind the subjects treated, and the immense range of ideas which were foreign to classical antiquity, it is even easy and flowing. Lastly, reverting with Professor Maurice to the saying of Albertus Magnus, we may well say that Aquinas has abundantly fulfilled his master's prophecy concerning him. The bellowings of that bull have been heard in all countries and in all generations. There is more than a feeble echo of them in our own. He has governed the schools and moulded the thoughts of nearly all Roman Catholic students, and has given a shape to the speculations of numbers who have never read any of his writings, and to whom his name is rather a terror than an attraction.

NOSTRADAMUS.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Le Propheties de Michel de Nostredame, dont il y en a trois cens qui n'ont jamais encores jamais esté imprimées. Troyes, 1570 (?).

Gutr Pronosticon am den savant meurbed Michel Nostredamus evit nas bloas, &c. Monhoulez (Morlaix, 1831).

Extrait de Propheties des Centuries de M. Nostradamus touchant l'état présent des affaires. Extract von Prophecyen, &c. French and Dutch. Delft, 1688.

Les Propheties de M. de Michel Nostredamus, dont il y en a trois cens qui n'ont jamais esté imprimées, ajoustées de nouveau par le dit Autheur. (Prédictions admirables pour les ans courans en ce siècle, recueillies des mémoires de feu Maistr. M. Nostradamus). Par V. Seve, Lyons, 1698.

Le Propheties de M. M. Nostradamus, dont il y en a trois cens qui n'ont jamais esté imprimées, ajoustées de nouveau, &c. &c. Lyons, 1698.

The Wizard; or, the Whole Art of Divining Dreams, by the help of which persons, &c. on the principles of Nostradamus, &c. 1816.

Le Bonheur Public, Prophetie de M. de M. &c. Par Gorault de St. Fargeau. Paris, 1848.

Cabinet Edition of the Encyclopædia Metropolitana. Occult Sciences. Griffin and Co. 1860.

Miraculous Prophecies, Predictions, and Strange Visions of sundry Eminent Men. London, 1794.

M. Nostredame (Les Propheties) ses Visions et Songes. Lyons, 1555, A. D.

Nostradamus, some of the Eminent Prophecies of (no place of publication). 1679.

NOSTRADAMUS.

A. D. 1503—1566.

THE sage who, with the lower and non-religious world—as distinguished from that which follows Dr. Cumming—deals chiefly in prophecy, and who now-a-days makes a large income from prophetic almanacs, is this year, perhaps, more lively than ever, and in his latest edition of "Zadkiel" boldly attacks the press for daring to assert that astrology was "exploded." "Who," he asks, "exploded it?" and, receiving no answer to his question, he asserts that, because England does not believe in the voice of the stars, we see "among the poor want, misery, and indifference to Religion, Demons of Crime grovelling in vice—all the horrors of brutal ignorance, and the retrograde march of civilization; among the rich, bloated wealth, sinful and soul-enslaving luxury, cruelty, oppression, and harsh principles of law advocated . . . . . And the kingdoms of Europe, reaping no fruit from experience, but ever ready to obey the evil influences of the martial star, and pour out each other's hearts' blood!

THESE! THESE ARE THE DIRE EVILS REAPED FROM THE MODERN ATTEMPTS TO DECRY THE SCIENCE OF ASTROLOGY." The capitals are the writer's own.

But Zadkiel has a set-off against unbelief. He cannot only refer to the Tetrabiblos of Ptolemy, to Plato, Pythagoras, Nigidius Figulus, and Manilius, Bacon, Melancthon, Nostradamus, Al Hakim the Wise, and John Kepler ("here be names, we hope"), but to the vast increase of believers of to-day. Cardinal Wiseman told us that, by the colportage system in France, from eight to nine millions of volumes were annually distributed; but, finding "that *exploded* fallacies" of astrology were still preserved as scientific truths in these books, "the Government wisely required a stamp," and, of 7500 works examined, three-fourths were rejected. It is possible, of course, that the Cardinal's friends wished to keep out some of the *explosive* fallacies of Protestantism as well as "exploded fallacies" of astrology; but Zadkiel chuckles over the free press in England, and, to show our superiority to France, gives the returns of the astrological almanacs in the following list:—

"Moore's Almanac sells about . .	600,000
Partridge's about	290,000
Zadkiel's about	55,000
Orion's, Old Moore's, and others .	50,000
Yearly total . . .	995,070

As each copy may be judged to be perused by six persons, this gives an aggregate number of readers not much below

six millions! what other branch of literature can surpass this?" (*Zadkiel's Almanac for* 1863).

What, indeed! Perhaps, after all—and this is the most melancholy part of the matter—these returns are not exaggerated by more than one-third, which, if so, leaves us four millions of astrological triflers, idlers, believers, or devotees, out of about ten millions of readers, if we may boast so many. If this be all that we have reached after many years of teaching, the ardent scholar may well ask with Milton, "What boots it with incessant care strictly to meditate the thankless muse?" and may join with Zadkiel, from another point of view indeed, in lamenting the retrograde movement of civilization.

Excepting, of course, Bacon and Kepler, many of the old disciples of astrology were mere puppets. Nostradamus has a sounding name, and he has certainly published twelve "centuries" (hundreds) of quatrains of prophecy; but, after reading most of these carefully, we may fairly say that, out of the fifty thousand lines, more than half are so utterly mystical that they cannot be understood, and that, of the remainder, only about one-tenth can be applied. His art is much the same as that practised at the present day. A direct application he seldom gives; but it is fair to say—little as it may be—that an ardent believer in his prophetic spirit could twist, perhaps, twenty of his verses into some comprehensible application. It is very possible that no one else would agree to that application; indeed, we always, with all prophets, want a key to the prophecy after it has occurred, and our modern soothsayers take

care to supply us with one under the heading of "prophecies fulfilled."

Michel Nostradamus, a man probably of Jewish descent,* but said to have been of noble family, "now only remembered," writes a biographer, "as the author of the most celebrated predictions published in modern times," was in his own day a skilful physician. He was born on the 14th December, 1503. His father was a notary public, and his grandfather a physician. Michel, having studied at Montpellier, was driven away by the plague there in 1522; he then travelled, and, returning to Montpellier, took his degree. At Agen he became intimate with Julius Cæsar Scaliger, whom he styles a Virgil in poetry, a Cicero in eloquence, and a Galen in medicine. His attachment to Scaliger induced him to make some stay in the town; and he there married, but lost, at the end of four years, his wife and the children he had by her. Agen became insupportable to him, and, after having travelled for twelve years in Guienne, Languedoc, and Italy, he returned to Provence, and settled at Salon, where he married a lady of a very ancient family. He was invited, by a deputation of the inhabitants of Aix, to visit that town, in consequence of the plague occurring there, and was of such service, by the invention of a powder, that he received for

* "Il s'en glorifiait, et l'avait la prétention d'être issu de la tribu d'Issachar; il se faisait l'application de ces paroles de Paralipomènes," (I. 12, vers. 32), *De filiis quoque Issachar, viri eruditi, qui noverunt singula tempora. Biographie Universelle*, NOSTREDAME, par M. W—s.

several years a pension in return. In 1547 he succeeded equally well in Lyons; and, on returning to Salon, where he had settled, he employed himself, not only in compounding medicines, but also in studying astrology and the arts of divination and prophecy. The predictions he wrote at first in prose, but afterwards, thinking better of the matter, he turned them into verse, and in 1555 published his first three centuries, with a bombastic dedication to his son Cæsar, then an infant.

Nostradamus did not forget to speak of himself and his wonderful gift in this dedication, and, in a superstitious age, easily set the ball of his own fame rolling. Notwithstanding the proverb that a prophet is but poorly received in his own country, the fame of the arch-seer grew to a very respectable height; and, although many called him an impostor, others declared that "his inspiration came from God," about which he himself appears to have had the least doubt of any.

Catherine de Medicis, "the godless regent," who "trembled at a star," hearing of him, persuaded her son, Henry II, to send for him to Paris, where he was received graciously, and sent back to his own country "loaded with presents;" that is, the king gave him two hundred crowns, and despatched him to Blois to foretell the destinies of the two royal children there. Encouraged by his success, he increased his quatrains to twelve centuries. Shortly afterwards, the king being slain at a tournament, all the French world consulted the prophet's book of quatrains to find whether he had foretold the circum-

stances. In the thirty-fifth quatrain of the fifth century were found the following lines:—

> "Le lion jeune le vieu surmontera;
> En champ bellique par singulier duel,
> Dans cage d'or les yeux lui crevera
> Deux plaies une, puis mourir; mort cruelle!"

We presume that the golden cage in which the lion was to finish his existence referred to the gilded armour of the king, or the golden bars of the kingly helmet, which heralds always represent front-faced and somewhat more open than that of a nobleman, certainly less protected than that of a simple esquire. Perhaps in modern days we may see the difficulty of fully adapting the prophecy; but with the French of that day it was otherwise, and the prophet thereon became very much in request. Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, and his wife, Margaret of France, honoured him with a visit; Charles IX, on his progress through France, sent for him, and, it is said—the story is told of other astrologers—determined to put him to death, and asked him in bitter jesting if he could foretell the hour of his own death. "Sire," said the cunning physician, "the fates have withheld from me the exact hour of my death; but, on consulting the stars, I found out thus much, that I shall die some very short time before your Majesty: our fates are inseparably connected. You will not long survive me." It need hardly be added that the superstitious king did not carry out his intention of slaying the astrologer. He was, indeed, appointed his physician in ordinary, and Henry presented him with a purse of two hundred crowns. His popularity having in the meantime been on the wane

in Salon, he begged that he might be treated with more respect; hereupon the king stated publicly that "all enemies of the physician should be reckoned as his own."

Nostradamus lived about sixteen months after this, dying on the 2nd of July, 1566. He was variously estimated as a rogue, a charlatan, a fool, an enthusiast, and a prophet. Even so lately as 1806 a M. Bouys published a defence of him, in which he claims for him the merit of having foretold the death of our Charles I, that of the Duc de Montmorency, son of Louis XIII, the persecution of the Christian Church in 1792, the elevation of Napoleon to the Empire, the duration of his reign, the fact (?) of his being equally powerful at sea and on land, and the conquest of the Corsican hero by the English.

"The people of Salon," says M. Bouche,* "yet believe that Nostradamus shut himself up alive in his tomb, with a lamp, paper, ink, pens, and books, and that he threatens with death any one who shall have the boldness to open it. This superstitious belief cannot but be very useful to the speculators who put forth new editions of the centuries of Nostradamus, with new quatrains adapted to recent events."

"No one," says a believer in the subject of this paper, "should say that he has been at Salon without having visited the tomb of the great wizard. His monument may be seen at this day (1816). It is on the right hand of the traveller as he enters the door of the cloister, against the wall. It is nothing more than a projection of marble of about a foot square, and about the height of a man;

* "Essai sur l'Histoire de Provence," p. 69.

the lower part is in the form of a slope, or shelve. Upon this tomb is the cast of the wise man; it represents him as he was at the age of sixty-two, when he died; his coat of arms, together with that of his wife, is in a square of black cloth; between this cast and that of his lady is his epitaph, in Latin."

Of this latter here follows a translation. One will not fail to notice the similarity of the wish expressed on the tomb of Shakspere and on that of Nostradamus. With him, as with Michael Scott, is buried his great book of spells; and the verses of Scott, in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," might be aptly quoted, should any one, like William of Deloraine, dare to profane his tomb:—

> "It was iron clasped and iron bound,
> And he thought as he took it the dead man frown'd."

HERE REST THE BONES
OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS
MICHAEL NOSTRADAMUS,
The only one worthy in the judgment of all Mankind to write,
with his almost inspired pen, and according to
THE DIRECTION OF THE STARS,
The Events which should happen upon Earth.
He lived to the age of 62 years, 6 months, and 6 days,
AND DIED AT SALON, ANNO 1566.

Beware you disturb not his repose!

ANNE TOUCHE GEMELLE, HIS WIFE, WISHES ETERNAL FELICITY TO HER HUSBAND.*

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* D. M.—Clarissimi ossa Michaelis Nostradami unicus omnium

This Anne Touche Gemelle is said to have helped her husband on the way to eternal felicity by having poisoned him. Let us hope that this story is, as is most probable, untrue.

Of course those curious about the matter of this paper will only consult the old editions of Lyons or Troyes, 1568, a small 8vo, and that of Amsterdam, a 12mo, 1668. There is an edition of his prophecies of which political capital was largely made against Cardinal Mazarin. This is its title and date, "Les Vraies Centuries de Michel Nostradamus expliquées sur les affaires de ce temps, 1652." The prophet of Salon had, like most men who have attained any celebrity, his opponents as well as supporters. Ant. Coullard wrote bitterly against him, and Conrad Badius published in 1562 a satire in verse against him, entitled "Les Vertus de notre Maître Nostradamus." But if one or two attacked him, hundreds have defended him. One man wrote a commentary on his quatrains, another published a concordance to them,* and so late as 1806 Théodore Bouys published with reference to him "New Considerations based upon the instinctive Clairvoyance of Man, on Oracles, Sybilles, Prophecies, and particularly on Nostradamus."

Here is the prediction about our Charles I, which is at

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judicio digni cujus penè divino calamo totius orbis ex Astrorum influxu futuri eventus conscriberetur, &c. The name of his wife is given as Anna Pontia Gemella, a native of Salon.

* "Concordance des Prophéties de N——, avec histoire." Guynaud, 1693.

least singular from having been written and printed in the year 1598:—

"Gand et Bruxelles marcheront contre Anvers;
Sénat de Londres mettront à mort leur Roi;
Le sel et le vin lui seront à l'envers,
Pour eux avoir regné en désarroi."

The one which follows, however, is yet more so. In dedicating his work to Henry II, Nostradamus told that sovereign that the Church of Rome would suffer much persecution, "et durera ceste cy jusques à l'an mille septcent nonante deux, que l'on cuidera estre une renovation de siècle." To appreciate the force of this prediction it is necessary to remember that in 1792 (Sept. 22) the French Republic decreed the abolition of the old method of measuring time from the birth of Christ, and that all public acts were to be reckoned from the new era—in fact, from the year One.

But, in spite of these lucky guesses, the major part of the quatrains of Nostradamus are to us as incomprehensible as "Hebrew-Greek" was to Sir John Falstaff. What, for instance, can we understand by this, which relates to our own land?

"Le Grand Empire fera par Angleterre,
Le Pempotam des ans plus au trois cents;
Grands copies passee par mer et terre,
Les Lusitans n'en feront pas contens."

Does it relate to the dissatisfaction which Portugal felt, and perhaps now feels, at the success of England's colonies? Again, to what Grecian princess does this allude?—

" La dame Grecque de beauté aydigue,
Heureuse faits de ports innumerable,
Hors translaté en regne Hispanique,
Captive prinse, mourir mort miserable."

This is the seventy-eighth quatrain of the ninth century. In the following one, printed, as all the other extracts from the book, *verbatim et literatim*, many have pretended to see a prophecy of the death of Louis XVI:—

" Pluye, Faim, Guerre en Perse non cessée,
La foy trop grand trahiri le monarque;
Par finie en Gaule commencée,
Secret auguste pour a un estre parque."

" The Rain, Famine, War in Persia not being ended,
Too great credulity shall betray the monarch;
Being ended *there*, it shall begin in *France*,
A secret omen to one that he shall die."

The English translator in 1794 adds, " No sooner had a peace been settled between Lord Cornwallis and Tippoo Saib, than war was declared against France, which proves a striking instance of the truth of this prediction." Louis XVI. was put to death in 1793. The next that we have to present to the reader forms one, we presume, amongst the many which may have had a partial fulfilment; or, on the other hand, mayhap it has yet to come to pass; for it is a striking beauty in Nostradamus, as well as in other prophets, that their predictions are so widely made that, if not applicable to one person or age, they are open to fit another. To take an instance, the modern, so-called " Zadkiel " having, as it happens, last year prophesied the

death of Lord Russell, and several others whose great age would naturally scarcely require a prophet to foretell a proximate decease, to-day eats his own words, and declares that the application was wrongly made, and that, if the Prime Minister do not die this year, he will "come to much honour in October or November next." "Truly, there is much virtue in an 'if.'" This is the quatrain to which we allude:—

> "Regne Gaulois tu seras changé,
> En lieu estrange est translaté l'Empire,
> En autre mœurs et lois feras rangé,
> Rouan et Chartres te feront bien du pire."

Of course Nostradamus has been put to other political use than that of fulminating against Cardinal Mazarin. In 1848, when all the French papers were flattering the French Republic and the French people, a certain M. Girault de Saint-Fargeau published a folio broadside called "Le Bonheur Public," a prophecy of Michel Nostradamus. This "public good" is a curious paper, and the prophecy translated and given to it by M. Saint-Fargeau, who has also Frenchified the style so as to render it more readily understandable ("dont on a *francisé* le style pour le rendre plus facile à comprendre"), is certainly the largest ever made by Michel. The clumsiness in which the style is Frenchified is apparent to all. The writer goes into statistics, and gives us a crowd of figures, budgets of expenses, Justice, Worship, Public Instruction, and Foreign Affairs. In it three great French Revolutions are predicted—1793, 1848, and 1998. There was to be

the abolition of the punishment of death, and a general disarmament in 1860 by the decision of a congress of all the States of Europe. Twenty-five thousand colonists were to be yearly gratuitously deported from France, and in return these grateful colonists would send trees, grain, vegetables, and animals susceptible of being naturalized in France, and fit also for increasing the means of nourishment for those at home, and to enlarge the comfortable existence (*bien-être*) of the indigenous population.

After having discoursed considerably about matters connected rather with industrial exhibitions and public workshops than with anything else, this gentleman who "frenchifies" old Nostradamus exhausts his broadside, and then tells us that the manuscript—which, by the way, was taken in 1847 from the tomb of Nostradamus, at Salon, in the arrondissement of Aix, department of Bouches-du-Rhone—begins to get imperfect, and offers more than one gap to the reader, since the last page has been spoilt by the damp. "It is with great trouble," says the romancist, "that we can decipher the following:—

"'. . . Europe . . . . La France the capital . . . . civilized world . . . . natural limits the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees . . .'"

Most readers will remark here, that, as the proverbial nod is as good as a wink, the damp has done not so much harm. We are told that we can manage to fill up these lacunæ. The prophecies, indeed, are rather improved than "détériorés par l'humidité." At least so says M. G. de Saint-Fargeau. Let us go on:—

"'. . . Germany . . . vast democratic confederation . . . Bavaria, Saxony, Austria, Hungary, . . . another confederation . . . the Netherlands, Hanover, Prussia and Denmark . . .'"

This seems rather droll and a little out of the right line just now; but we do not know what we have yet to come to—

"'To Sweden will be united Finland and the district of Saint Petersburg, of which the town of that name will become the capital . . . The Russians . . . pushed back beyond . . . Dnieper . . . Poland . . . extends to the Black Sea on the south . . . to the Baltic between the Vistula and Dwina on the north.'"

Really the damp has been very obliging to the prophet.

"'Crimea, Circassia and Georgia . . . from . . . descendants of Schamyl . . . Turks . . . swept back into Asia . . . . Greece, Candia, Bulgaria, Albania, Roumelia . . . . Moldavia and Wallachia . . . of which Constantinople is the capital . . . Italy a federation . . . . Sicily, Naples, States of the Church, Lombardy, Piedmont.'"

Nostradamus, in truth, in 1847, knew something. If he only comes as near the truth with us as he has done with others, farewell England!

"'L'Angleterre . . . whose colonies have been long made free . . . will renounce her Indian possessions . . . reduced to the part which her insular position assigns to her . . . in consequence of the

immense development of the commercial navies of the two Americas . . .'"

Equally as genuine as the above extracts, so far as having been written by Nostradamus, are the following lines on the signification of dreams, extracted from the mighty book of Nostradamus which, we were told, in 1816,* was iron-clasped and iron-bound, and therefore had *not* suffered from damp.

Absence. To dream of any absent friend
Will news of them or ill portend;
And if at thy bed-side they seem,
Their death, perhaps, may solve thy dream.

The above is dogmatic; those which follow are according to the fashion of interpreters of dreams from Joseph downwards—merely symbolic, or simply *per contra.*

Anchor. See an anchor in yr dream
And certain hope and comfort beam.

Bees. Bees in your dream good friends imply,
Who'll serve you most industriously;
But, if bees sting, it plainly shows
That thou hast busy active foes.

Belly. To dream one's belly 's large and great
Predicts a fair and large estate.

Does it? In the name of Sir John Falstaff, that ton of man, why so? should it not rather predict dropsy?

Bulls. To dream of bulls is dread and drear:
Some enemies be sure are near.

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* The Wizard, p. 15. See list of books consulted.

Cradle. A cradle means, to maid or wife,
A joyful but a busy life.

Coach. Dream that you in a carriage ride
And poverty shall lower pride.

Death. To dream of death a marriage means;
So variegated are life's scenes.

Hand. To dream a cold hand is put to you in bed,
Your next news will be a relation is dead.

Onions. To dream of eating onions means
Much strife in thy domestic scenes.

Paper. To dream that you on paper write
Denotes accusers, hate and spite.

Silver. To dream of silver means deceit:
The slippery coin's an emblem meet.

Virgin. A virgin discoursing is good in a dream,
Joy and delight on your house shall beam.

Wound. To dream of a wound is sorrow and grief:
Of dressing a wound is cure or relief.

Writing. Dreaming of writing ever means news
'Twill grant or deny, will give or refuse.

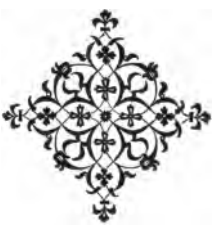
After this, who will deny the wisdom of our ancestors? As I am unable to find the original of the above "choice" productions, it would be absurd to give Nostradamus the credit of them.

Nostradamus was, of course, a weather prophet, and published during several years an almanac and many other works, most of them medical, of which the names only are remembered. A famous Latin distich, attributed to Beza, and also to Jodelle, contains as much good sense

as it does point, and is worthy to be remembered in connection with this prophet.

> "Nostra damus, cùm falsa damus, nam fallere nostra est;
> Et cùm falsa damus, nil nisi nostra damus."

A townsman of Michel has published an abridgment of his life, and Adelung has placed him amongst his portraits in the "Histoire de la Folie Humaine," a work which, if it were fully done, would be of the driest and most melancholy reading, but surely, also, a story without an end. It is questionable whether there be any believers in the prophet now alive; still, many astrologers and alchemists buy their books of Mr. Millard, in Newgate-street; and, as we have yet amongst us those who believe in Joanna Southcote and her Shiloh, there may also be those who puzzle their bemused brains over the Centuries of Michel Nostradamus.



THOMAS A KEMPIS AND THE IMITATIO CHRISTI.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

De Imitatione Christi et Contemptu Mundi omniumque ejus vanitatum. Codex de Advocatis Sæculi xiii. Londini, apud Guil. Pickering, 1851.

Imitation de Jésus-Christ. Traduction Nouvelle. Sur l'Edition Latine de 1764. *Revue sur huit Manuscripts.* Par M. L'Abbé Valart. MDCCLXVI.

The Christian's Pattern; or, A Treatise of the Imitation of Christ. In four books. By George Stanhope, D.D., Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty. Ninth edition. 1714.

De l'Imitation de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ. Par Jean Gerson, Chancelier de l'Université de Paris. Traduite en Français, en Grec, en Anglais, en Allemand, en Italien, en Espagnol, et en Portugais; (texte Latin en regarde). Publiée sous la direction de J. B. Monfalcon. Lyon, 1841.

Imitation of Christ. A new translation. Burns, London, 1856.

Imitation of Christ. New edition. 12mo. J. H. & J. Parker, London, 1861.

Sunday at Home. Part for November, 1865.

THOMAS A KEMPIS AND THE IMITATIO CHRISTI.

WHEN one is perfectly aware that, of all popular books, popular in the best sense, and widely spread in the fullest, the *Imitatio Christi* stands first; when we call to mind that Dr. Johnson said of it that it had gone through more editions than there had been months since its publication—it may seem anomalous to place it amongst the rare books. But there are circumstances which render its position here perfectly legitimate. The history of the book is curious, and almost every one who reads it becomes either a Kempisian or an anti-Kempisian, or, in a special sense, a Thomist, or an anti-Thomist. Last year an edition* was published in which the present writer gave a full account of the three claimants to the authorship of the celebrated book, Jean Gerson, Jean Gersen, and Thomas the Monk of À Kempis, whom scholars now generally presume to have been a mere copyist. Yet, writing some months after

* "*Like unto Christ.*" *De Imitatione Christi.* Usually ascribed to Thomas-à-Kempis. Low, Son, & Marston. 1865.

this publication, Andrew Thomson, D.D., states, in an article in the "Sunday Magazine," that the weight of evidence is in favour of À Kempis, and, stranger still, that "Gersen" is merely an alteration of "Gerson!" Here are his words:—

"The earliest edition of this religious treatise carries us back through nearly four centuries, or a hundred years beyond the Reformation. In the intervening ages, it is affirmed to have been translated into sixty different languages, and to have passed through 1800 editions, and probably to have been more read than any other religious book, the Bible alone excepted. And that it has in no degree been indebted to external circumstances connected with its composition for the hold which it retains of human interest, may be concluded from the fact, that its authorship was, for many ages, the subject of as much discussion as that of the celebrated letters of Junius, and that the controversial works which have been expended on this one subject have occupied a hundred times more space than the original work itself. It became a national question between the learned schools of different countries; and universities ranged themselves on the side of opposite claimants. The theologians and literary men of France generally contended that Thomas-à-Kempis was merely the transcriber of the book, and that John Gerson, a famous chancellor of the University of Paris, was its real author. Others put forward the name of John Gersen, whose name has been found attached to one manuscript; but *one is strongly tempted to suspect that this is only a slight misnomer for*

the Chancellor. The German and Flemish writers who entered the lists in this long-pending discussion, declared themselves on the side of A-Kempis, and were ultimately supported by the powerful authority of the Sorbonne. The external evidence on the side of the two principal claimants seems nearly equal; but not to speak of a very distinct line of unbroken tradition, the internal evidence turns the scale in favour of A-Kempis; for Gerson was never the inmate of a monastery, which Thomas-à-Kempis was for seventy years, and the whole composition bears the indubitable mark of monastic life, and evidently comes from the pen of a solitary, though kind-hearted ascetic."

The "distinct line of *unbroken* tradition," alas! is so faint that the good doctor would find it hard to trace. Kempis was a "copying" monk; many works are known to have—to use a penny-a-liner's phrase—"proceeded from his pen," amongst others, several testaments, old and new; but no one ever accused him of writing those books. M. Gence has described the manuscript of 1425, on which all À Kempis's claims rest, and all that is therein is this: that there is on the MS. a note in a strange hand, in Latin, in which note we are told that it is "to be understood that this tractate was written by the upright and excellent man, Thomas, of Mount St. Agnes, called Thomas de Kempis; it was written by the hand of the author in 1425." But this anonymous note, as the editor of the French Polyglot says, proves nothing.* Nothing, certainly,

* Présente-t-il du moins l'évidence positive de la date de sa

in favour of À Kempis; but it internally proves this, that the note was not written by À Kempis *if* he were the author. Surely the writer of "Like unto Christ" would never call himself *probus et egregius vir*. As for the links of unbroken tradition, we do not really know where they are. Thomas Dibdin, M.A., a good bibliopolist and a scholar, thought that *descriptus ex manu* might be read as "copied out by," and tells us that which the translator of the latest edition does, that only solitary books ever bore À Kempis's name. The edition which attributed the book to À Kempis is called by M. Monfalcon the *editio princeps* (he doubts with Dibdin and Gence the edition of 1468), and was printed in 1472. But in 1474 we have a certain edition assigning the book to John Gerson! And there is an edition without date, which M. de Gregory *places to the year* 1470, on the testimony of an old catalogue which bears this title, &c, "De Imitatione Christi. . . Incipit liber Magistri Johannis Gerson de Imitatione Christi." Nay, in 1481 there is an edition which attributes the work to St. Bernard. "Incipit opus

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composition en 1425? Non sans doute. Cette date est-elle inscrite sur le manuscrit lui-même, et de la main qui a transcrit le texte? Point de tout: elle se trouve dans une note anonyme et bien évidemment écrite par une main étrangère. La voici:—"*Notandum quod iste tractatus editus est a probo et egregio viro magistro Thoma de Monte Sanctæ Agnetis et canonico regulari in Trajecto Thomas de Kempis dictus, descriptus ex manu auctoris in Trajecto, anno* 1425, *in societatu provincialatus.*" Cette note anonyme, et d'un main étrangère, ne saurait donc avoir l'autorité du manuscrit lui-même."

J. B. MONFALCON, *De l'Auteur de l'Imitation.*

Beati Bernardi Saluberrimū de Imitatione Xρι et contemptu mundi quod *Johanni Gerson* . . . attribuitur." For many editions after this the name of À Kempis totally disappears. So much for the chain of evidence.

But Dr. Thomson has told his readers that he fancies "Gersen" was a mere misprint for "Gerson"! Can it be so? In the year 1638, years after Thomas of Saint Agnes and Jean Gerson had shared the honours of writing this excellent tractate, a little edition in 12mo. was published, carefully collated with ten MSS, in which the book was boldly placed to the score of John Gersen, Abbot of Verceil. Here is the title:—

"De Imitatione Christi libri iv. per Franciscum Valgravium Angl. benedict. . . . J. Gerseni Abbati Vercellensi, italo benedictino ex dena manuscriptorum fide vindicato, Lutetiæ, 1638."

Here the English Benedictine vindicates the existence of the Italian Benedictine, whom Andrew Thomson, D.D., has so kindly endeavoured to annihilate, or rather to identify with the Parisian Chancellor. The fact is that Jean Gersen of Canabaca, or Cabaliaca,* was Abbot of a Convent of Benedictines in the thirteenth century, from the year 1220 to 1230; and he seems, says M. Monfalcon—who, perhaps very naturally after all, sums up in favour of his own countryman, and against the Piedmontese monk—"to have much more legitimate right to be considered the author of the Imitation than À Kempis him-

* Now Cavaglia, in the Vercellais (Piedmont).

self. For, unless we adduce barbarous Latin (and Italianized words can be set off against Germanized words), the "Imitatio" presents no internal proof of a German monk having written the book, whereas Gersen has one special proof which argues in his favour, and equally against A Kempis and Gerson." This was pointed out by Father Ganganelli, who died as Pope Clement XIV.*

"What has made," wrote Ganganelli to his friend, a Canon of Orsino, "the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* so valuable and affecting is, that the author (Gersen, Abbé of Verceil, in Italy) has transfused into it all that holy charity with which he himself was divinely animated.

"Gerson is commonly confounded with Gersen; nevertheless it is easy to prove that neither Gerson nor Thomas à Kempis were the authors of that matchless book; and this, I own, gives me infinite pleasure, because I am delighted with the thought of such an excellent work being (having been) written by an Italian. There is evident proof in the fifth chapter of the fourth book that it was not a Frenchman who wrote the *Imitation*. It is there expressed that the priest, clothed in his sacerdotal habit, carries the cross of Jesus Christ *before* him;† now all the world knows that the chasubles (a kind of cope which

* I am quite aware that many look upon these very letters of Ganganelli as forgeries; but this does not invalidate the testimony of the citation, its evidence being internal.

† "Sacerdos sacris vestibus indutus . . *Ante* se crucem in casula portat, ut Christi vestigia diligenter inspiciat, et sequi frequenter studeat." *De Imit. Christi*, lib. iv. cap. 5, sec. 3. *Codex de Advocatis*, sæculi xiii.

priests wear at mass) in France differ from those in Italy, in this, that they wear their cross upon their backs; but I will not write a dissertation, being content to assure you that I am, &c."*

This letter is dated Rome, 6th February, 1749, and may be at least cited as a proof that such an individual as Gersen did exist. The similarity of the names is simply curious, nor is the patronymic so uncommon as to make it more than that. The book-learned editor of Nutt's Catalogue of Foreign Theological Literature quotes almost the whole sentence given above, but with the clauses in different order, and he boldly puts down the dictum to "CLEMENT XIV."† But, after all, the next paragraph is almost equally in favour of Gerson the Chancellor. "He is marked with the cross behind." *Post se cruce signatus est.*‡ There is, however, a wide difference between the phrases "ante se portat" and "signatus est." Does Ganganelli's citation allude to the vestments at all?

The dispute, which probably will never be settled, is a very interesting one; but, having nothing further to say, I may be pardoned for passing on to the title of the book. The English translation is very awkward-looking and un-

* Letters of Pope Clement XIV (Ganganelli), translated from the French edition of Sottin le Jeune. Fifth Edition. London, Baldwin and Co. MDCCLXXXI.

† Catalogue of Theological Works. David Nutt, Strand, 1837. No. 3224 in list, KEMPIS (Thom. à).

‡ "*Rückwärts ist er mit einem Kreuze bezeichnet.* Ὀπίσω αὐτῷ τῷ σταυρῷ ἐσφραγίσθη." Renderings from the Polyglot edition of "Like unto Christ." Lyons, 1841.

English. Of course the Latin word, which is admirable, has been a stumbling-block to all translators. The first, *Mayster William*, who puts forth his version, printed in London by Wynkyn de Worde and Richard Pinson, called it "The Imitation, or *Following of Christ.*" Edward Hake,* of Gray's Inn, copied the title, and says that the original was first written by Thomas Kempise, a Dutchman, amended and polished by Sebastien Castalio, an Italian, and Englished by Edward H. Mr. Thomas Rogers in 1584, William Page in 1639, cited by Dr. Watt in the Encyclopædia Britannica as the translator, and Luke Milbourne, who, in 1697, turned the book into quaint and sometimes good rough verse, followed Mayster William in his long and periphrastic name. Dean Stanhope, who has his faults as a translator, since "il a mutilé le texte; tantôt il l'abrége, tantôt il l'étend outre mesure, et toujours il en dénature la couleur,"—yet had sense enough to break away from the un-English *Imitation*, and called his version the "Christian's Pattern." And finally, in spite of the dictum of one of my reviewers, that my own version of the title is "impertinent," I have ventured to call it, in plain English, "Like unto Christ."

In an age like the present, when we care more for the comfortable surroundings of life than for anything else, to study this book, which has mainly been written with reference to the former, is a bold experiment; but, because it is bold, it will be interesting. It will be like walking

* The Imitation, or Following of Christ. London, 1567, in 8vo.

in a cool room and a purer atmosphere after being heated with the scents, music, fine dresses, exercise, and the other warm accessories of the ball-room. To read in a gold-seeking and self-seeking age of a man who looked upon wealth as a curse, who considered place a trial, and who thought the very friendship and society of women dangerous in the extreme—to read of such a one in an age which runs after the heels of the prettiest and most showy girl, which elevates her to a goddess and uses her as a toy, will at least be something novel; for what must many of our ladies be when M. Dupin, at Paris, feels constrained to publish a pamphlet "*Sur le Luxe effréné des Dames*"—on the unbridled luxury (of dress) of women?—when at Marseilles men band together not to marry till women grow less expensive?—when virtue is laughed at if poor, and success, even of the most shameful kind, is honoured, or at least tolerated? "You see that man: that's old Johnson of our square. Well, he managed the estates of three young clients, and somehow they grew poor, and he grew rich: d'ye see? He's worth knowing, he is." Or your friend points out Simkins. "You know Simkins. What! don't know Simkins? He made a lot of money in the Crimean war by selling putrid meat and bad hay; not a bad dodge, eh?" Such conversations as these are to be heard every day. In New York successful men are pointed out who have made money in like manner, "by fair dealing, if possible, but money by any means;" and these are the new Democracy, abused by the Press, but envied by their fellow-citizens. In Paris a new

aristocracy has sprung up, which depends upon speculation for its sudden fortunes, but which has in great measure supplanted the old titular and territorial nobility. It is an age of luxury and material wealth; and nothing succeeds like success.

The very name of asceticism has almost been forgotten. Our Quakers and Methodist religionists are losing their hold upon the world. Arts and manufactures have become luxurious, pleasing, and delightful. The new philosophy teaches us to enjoy the world; to make the most of life, not to despise it; to use the world, not to contemn it. Hence asceticism has grown out of fashion; for the very spirit of asceticism demands us to control our passions, to throw away our luxury, to despise riches, place, and honours, and to exercise ourselves in hardness, want, endurance, and a noble poverty.

Of all treatises on this religious art, dogma, or intention, the work which passes under the name of "Thomas à Kempis" is surely the best and most fascinating. It is one which Dr. Johnson said "the world had opened its arms to receive." It is as popular as "Robinson Crusoe" or the "Pilgrim's Progress." It has been translated into all tongues, and many times over into French and English. It is called the "Imitation of Christ," the original title being "De Imitatione Christi;" but, in a recent translation, as has already been mentioned, in which there is a history of the work, and parallel Scripture passages proving the perfect Evangelical feeling therein, it is called "Like unto Christ," because its purport is to teach the reader to

aim at being as nearly as possible truly like our Lord in life and deed. From the date of the first appearance of the "Imitatio" until now there have been, in all languages, perhaps three thousand editions; and yet no one knows with certainty who was the author. In fact, the latest English editor presumes that the book had many authors; that it is so good, that the spirit of many men, each chastened by sorrow and purified by faith, added word after word, and passage after passage to "the priceless sentences of Thomas à Kempis," as the Rev. Charles Kingsley has called them.

Everybody has praised the book. It is one which Roman Catholics claim, for its author was an Augustine monk, or a chancellor of a monastery—certainly a priest; although it is as free from exclusiveness as the Bible itself. It was a favourite with Jean Jacques Rousseau, who wept over its pages; and yet he was a man who detested Romanism—nay, Christianity itself. A version of it was edited by John Wesley, and read by Whitefield, who abominated stage-players; another version was put into verse by Racine, the celebrated French dramatic poet; and a copy was carried about by Corneille, the great comic dramatist. Fontenelle, who wrote the "Plurality of Worlds," and who was suspected of Materialism, said that it was "the most excellent book that ever proceeded out of the hands of man, the Gospel being of Divine original." Johnson loved the book. Vaughan, author of "Hours with the Mystics," says that it can be "appreciated without taste, and understood without learning," and that

thousands upon thousands in castle and cloister have forgotten their sorrows and dried their tears over its earnest pages. We have seen that, in the opinion of the Rev. C. Kingsley, the sentences are "priceless;" in that of our greatest female writer, who assumes the name of George Eliot, they are inspired utterances, speaking to every soul and to every age. To come down to the very moment at which we write, the *Literary Churchman*, an organ of the High Church, calls it "this queen of all uninspired books; this marvellous book, which can bow the hearts of men and women of every class and creed;" and the *Nonconformist* newspaper speaks of it as the widest, most spread, and most excellent of all comforting works.

And yet the spirit of this good book is ascetic, distinctly and openly so. We have seen that the simple meaning of asceticism is merely the exercising of the body and mind in devout things; but at times it has included an obnoxious purpose—that is, a separation of oneself from the world. Whether good or bad in its effect depends much on its use or abuse. Half the people in the world—the poorer half—are forced into a kind of asceticism; their poverty *exercises* them against their will.

> Though the mills of God grind slowly,
> Yet He grinds exceeding small.

Few poor men can go through the mills of trouble, trial, and misfortune without being brought very nearly to the dust. But this asceticism has its dangerous side; and able men, nay, good men too, have hated it. It produces, as a natural consequence, the monk's cell and the nun's

cloister. It makes people put on strange dresses and purchase beads and crosses, whether they be Hindus, Mohammedans, or Christians. It induces the monk to fast, and the nun to whip herself, and the Brahmin to clinch his hand for ever till the nails grow through the back of it, and his limbs are stiff and powerless. At Benares it makes men run iron hooks through their backs, and get others to whirl them round like cockchafers on a string. It forces some to abstain from meats or marriage, or any simple natural pleasures. It made St. Simeon Stylites live for thirty years on the top of a pillar, beseeching God daily, and nightly, and hourly, for pardon and grace, and to cry out that thrice ten years—

> In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and colds,
> In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes, and cramps—
> A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,—
> Patient on this tall pillar, I have borne
> Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and sleet, and snow,
> While my stiff spine can hold my weary head,
> Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the stone.

In the present day it causes people to believe that God delights in the discomfort of his creatures; at any rate, that he pleasingly beholds them torment themselves; it makes us punish little children with Bible lessons they cannot comprehend, and terrify them with stories of Og, King of Bashan, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and visions of hell-fire; it makes Sunday, *dies Dominica*, the sweet Lord's day, a dreaded Sabbath; it interdicts the Sunday walk; it glosses over and blots out the mercies of God with the roaring thunders of his wrath.

Hence asceticism, which in itself is beautiful and needful, has been so misrepresented that men hate it. Gibbon, a man of colossal intellect, much fairness, and great learning, wrote thus of it: "The Ascetics who obeyed and *abused* the rigid precepts of the Gospel were inspired with a rigid enthusiasm, which represents *man as a criminal and God as a tyrant.* They seriously renounced the business and pleasures of the age; abjured the use of wine, of flesh, and of marriage; chastised their body, mortified their affections, and embraced a life of misery as the price of their eternal happiness."

It is in the last clause of the above sentence that the mistake of asceticism lies. If we are fools enough to demand, as Stylites does, "the white robe and the palm" for the self-inflicted mortifications, we then are judge and jury on ourselves. And, unfortunately, man will play those parts. He is good and saintly, pure and charitable, but he gets filled with spiritual pride. Hence upon works of asceticism is built the damnable doctrine of works of supererogation. You have punished yourselves in this world; reward yourselves in the next. You have said so many *aves* to-day, you need say none to-morrow. You fasted last week; you can feast this. There is the carnival, the farewell to flesh; and the dancing and junketings, when it may again be eaten. All this is flat against the words of the Apostles and Christ. The ascetics are upon the shifting sands of self-pleasing, even in the midst of their self-torments; but happily we find little or nothing of this spirit in "Like unto Christ."

This author resembles Bunyan in his treatment of the world. He looks upon it as vanity, as Solomon did; as a huge Vanity Fair, as the Pilgrim did; but he goes on his way, and eats and drinks, and acts like a reasonable creature. All that he does is to lay down rules for our guidance under trial, and consolations for our sorrows under defeat. He tells a man not to harass nor to hamper himself, very much in the words of Marcus Antoninus or Seneca: "A pure, simple, steadfast mind is not distracted with many duties, because it does all things for the glory of God, and, in itself at ease, strives to be free from self-glory." He tells him, if he is young and sets to work to prepare himself to be a man, to fight no baby's battle, no fool's fight. "Who has a harder battle than the man who tries to conquer himself?" He reminds him that, after all, it does not much matter if he is not very clever or great, for "humble self-knowledge is a surer road to God than diving into the depths of science. Science, considered in itself, *is not sinful;* nor is the knowledge of anything that is good; it has been ordained of God: but the preference must be given to a good conscience and a holy life." And, in Wynkyn de Worde's translation, he asks what has become of all the learned men long dead: "Where be now all the royal poets, with their craftily conveyed poems; and elegant orators, with their orations garnished with elegancy; the philosophers, with their pregnant reasons and sentences?" And the author finishes by assuring us, "Truly learned is he who does the will of God, subduing also his own desires."

The prudential maxims of the writer are very well worthy of being laid to our heart. A young man is not to open his heart to everybody; to be "no fawner towards the wealthy, nor to be fond of being seen with great people;" and he is to "exercise charity towards all, but intimacy with very few."

To grow in spiritual progress, a man is especially warned not to interfere with other people's business, not to trouble himself with the sayings or doings of others, with what this one says, and that one thinks. Those matters do not concern us. "How is it possible," asks the author, "for a man to remain long at peace who intermeddles with other people's cares, who seeks occasions of disquietude abroad, and never examines himself at home?" How, indeed? If we were "more intent upon self-improvement, and less troubled about the outer world, then we might make some advance in wisdom." He tells us elsewhere that we should learn early to submit; trouble not ourselves who is on our side or who is against us; that we should humble ourselves, and think ourselves chiefly in the wrong; and that, unless we feel that we know worse of ourselves than of any others, we shall not be making much progress to the perfect life. If we want to play the peace-maker, we are to be at peace at home. The peace-maker is more useful than the learned; for, "while the man of violence and passion turns even good to evil, he who follows peace turns evil to good;" and so, therefore, we are to be peaceful and gentle, and to avoid quarrels, and to put up with slights and wrongs, and we shall be happy.

We are advised not to meddle with others, not to be inquisitive; for "what is it to thee whether a man does such and such, or says so and so? Thou art not required to answer for others, but for thyself." We are not to care nor to follow fame, nor the friendship of many, nor the regard of men, for these things generate distraction and great darkness of heart. To be thoughtful, watchful in prayer, and humble at all times, will alone make a man as he should be. Of self-esteem we are told very truly, as most men know who have thought much, that we cannot place too little confidence in ourselves, for we are often wanting in grace and sense. "The light we have is but small, and that we often lose through negligence. Oftentimes our mental blindness we do not perceive; ofttimes we act badly, and then make matters worse by our negligent excuses. We often think and weigh what *we* have to bear through others, but what *they* have to bear through us does not occur to us."

As the author of this precious book lived before men thought much of the suggestion of Duns Scotus, which, little more than a dozen years ago, the present Pope exalted into a dogma, it is by no means a surprising thing that À Kempis is utterly free from Mariolatry. He relies, like the Articles of the Anglican Church, upon one Name only, and finds none other under heaven given to man save that of Christ. "The kingdom of God is within you," he quotes from St. Luke in the beginning of the second book; "betake thyself then entirely to God: love Him with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and bid a

final adieu to this wretched world, and thou shalt find sweet content and comfort unspeakable. Learn to despise these outward vanities, and seek pure and spiritual satisfactions. Place all thy hopes, thy happiness, thy thoughts in them, and thou shalt find this kingdom grow up within thee, 'for the kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Rom. xiv. 17." This is Stanhope's translation. It is worthy of remark, also, that there is hardly a page in the "Imitatio" without its five or six references to or quotations from Holy Writ: a satisfactory proof that in the monastery, at least in those days, the Bible was diligently and devoutly studied.

Such are a few of A Kempis's priceless sentences taken almost haphazard. We have said nothing, for our space will not allow us, upon the religious beauty and fervour of the work. Readers will find religion best preached in the pages of the book itself; and it is scarcely our province to preach religion, although it may be our business to point the way to happiness and peace. The whole intention of the author or authors is to awaken man to his true relation with God, the highest Intelligence, and to keep him from Materialism, the lowest Intelligence. Thus wrote a true poet:—

> Our little lives are kept in equipoise
> By struggles of two opposite desires—
> The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
> And the more noble instinct that aspires.

DR. JOHN FAUSTUS.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

The Historie of the damnable life and deserued death of Doctor John Faustus. Newly imprinted and in conuent places amended: according to the true copie printed at Franckfort, and translated into English by P. F. Gent. Seene and allowed. Imprinted at London by Thomas Orwin, and are to be solde by Edward White dwelling at the little North door of Paules, at the signe of the Gun. 1592.

The Tragical historie of Dr. Faustus. By Christopher Marlowe. 4to. 1604.

Histoire prodigieuse et lamentable de Jean Fauste, grand et horrible enchanteur, avec sa morte épouventable. Dernière édition. A Roven, chez Clement Malassis. M.DC.LXVII.

Faustus: his Life, Death, and Descent into Hell. Translated from the German. By George Borrow (this is added in pencil). London. W. Simpkin and R. Marshal. 1825.

Early English Prose Romances, with Bibliographical and Historical Illustrations. Edited by William J. Thoms, F.S.A. Vol. III. London. Nattali and Bond. 1858.

Lives of Notorious Criminals, including that of Dr. Faustus. Chapbook. London, 1754.

Die Geschichte vom Faust, in Reimen, nach dem einzigen bekannten Exemplar von 1587, *in der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Kopenhagen: Die Deutschen Volksbücher von Faust und Wagner, &c.* Von I. Scheible. Stuttgart, 1849.

Festus, a Poem. By Philip James Bailey. Sixth Edition. Chapman and Hall. 1860.

DR. JOHN FAUSTUS.

A HISTORY, or a legend, or a mixture of both, which has not only furnished a subject for "Marlowe's mighty line," but has given to Goethe the plot of the greatest poem of the century, or, if we believe some, of all time, is worth our attention. When, moreover, this history has become the subject of as many volumes as would fill a goodly bookcase; when our children delight over that which horrified and astonished our great-great-grandfathers, one feels that there must be in it an element of popularity which is as enduring as it is perhaps difficult to account for. How many, too, are there who merely know the name and nothing else of the hero. If, at a competitive examination, the question, "Who was Faustus, and when did he flourish?" were proposed, how few would be able to answer it. It is not every one who can go to Mr. Thoms's capital book on early English prose romances, or to the People's Wonder-Book of Herr Scheible. The history of Faustus is involved so much in doubt, and at

the same time has so many points of interest for us, that it is worth while spending a few minutes over it.

"Truth is great, and will prevail," is a grand assertion, and one which has often consoled the dying moments of the martyr; but it will scarcely bear the calmer and closer investigation of the philosopher. Truth differs from truth, but not more than it essentially differs from itself; for, as the well-cut brilliant, when it comes from the hands of the lapidary, has its sixty-two facets—thirty-three above the belt, and twenty-nine below it—so each truth, after being handled by the historian, would seem to have at least sixty-two aspects, or, indeed, as many more, perhaps, as there may be people to look at it. As history is, according to some, a mere collection of biographies, biographical truth might be expected to be the simplest; but, not excepting that of Shakespeare, of whom we know little more than the date of his birth, marriage, and death, there is hardly a name in the "Biographie Universelle" about whom writers have not wrangled so much as to make the earnest student repeat the question of him whom Bacon calls jesting Pilate, and turn away in disgust. The occupation of the writers of one age seems to be that of whitewashing the black sheep of a past one—an employment in which both Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude have made themselves conspicuous; and, as there was found, soon after his death, one hand at least which scattered flowers on the tomb of Nero, we may possibly soon meet with an eccentric historian who will prove that both that emperor and Caligula were men of the highest moral

calibre, and with reference to whom it were, at any rate, as well to entertain historic doubts. When a character has been well blackened, however, it is exceedingly difficult thoroughly to cleanse it. Notwithstanding Horace Walpole's clever tract, and the more acute suggestions of his successors, we doubt whether Richard III. will not remain to the end of all time the crook-backed tyrant of Shakespeare, and the politic scoundrel of our school histories. Many people are fascinated by the coloured and sparkling rays thus brightly thrown out by a polished and cut truth. A university professor, in his inaugural lecture some short time back, fairly owned that he rather preferred his early and more popular ideas, and that, although some great writer might arise who would undertake to prove that Henry VIII. was a mild gentleman, exceedingly ill-used by ladies who deserved their fate, he would still rather cling to his old faith in the embodiment of an historic blustering and hectoring Blue Beard. No doubt many share a like feeling.

One of those characters about whose various biographies there is just the smallest scintillation of truth, and who has now fairly become the property of fiction, is Dr. Faust, known with us as Faustus, a German scholar who flourished in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and who has been constantly confused with Fust, the assistant, or, as some say, the patron of Gutenberg, who introduced into Germany moveable types about the same period. John Fust, who was evidently the capitalist, joined with Gutenberg and Schoeffer, the inventor of the

letter-punches, and by a law-suit dispossessed Gutenberg of any benefit from his discovery. Perhaps, therefore, any ignominy which may attach to his name he richly deserves; in fact, the theory of many is that the illuminators, missal and psalter writers, who were beaten out of the market by his machinery, invented the legends concerning him—viz. that he was aided by a personal attendant, a friendly Devil, who, after serving him for a stated number of years, at length bore him quick to hell as a payment for his services. Now, although we have been expressly warned not to confound the two Fausts, we believe that they have already been inextricably confounded, and that what simply belongs to one has been asserted of the other.

The Dr. Faustus was an astrologer and a chemist; and it is certainly not unlikely that popular superstition may have gifted him with a "familiar," just as it did Polydore Vergil, Jerome Cardan, and Paracelsus; of this latter braggadocio chemist it is said that he had one confined in the pummel of his sword. It is notable, also, that Faustus's Christian name, like that of Fust, was Johann. The subject of our sketch was born at Knittlingen, in Suabia, of peasant parents. He studied at Wittenberg; removed to Ingoldstadt, where he practised as a physician; received a considerable inheritance; was known to Melancthon, Tritheim, and other men of note of the period; gave himself up to magic, and died of the plague, in 1466—or, as tradition will have it, was carried away, as per contract—at a little village called Rimlich. For this latter, legendary occurrence, one or more villages, following the

example of the seven towns which contest the honour of Homer's birthplace, put in a claim—especially Breda, in Saxony, a small village on the Elbe, where the blood-besprinkled walls of the apartment may be seen, and where, to quote Jack Cade's friend, the "very bricks are alive to this day," to testify to the truth.

"That this hero was no imaginary one," says Mr. Thoms, "is clearly proved by the testimony of contemporary writers. Amongst the most important of these is the famous Trithemius, who, in a letter to Johann Wedunger, dated the 20th August, 1507, speaks of the subject of this notice as one 'qui se principem necromanticorum ausus est nominare, gyrovagus, battologus et circumcellio est,' and as having formed for himself this fitting title, 'Magister Georgius Sabellicus, Faustus junior, Fons Necromanticorum, Astrologus, Magus secundus, Chiromanticus, Agromanticus, Pyromanticus, in hydra arte secundus.' In 1539 he is mentioned by Begardo, in his 'Index Sanitatis.' Gastius also alludes to him in his 'Sermones Conviviales;' and he is also alluded to by Manilius in his 'Collectanea,' on the authority of Melancthon." Gones tells us that, though there is much conflicting evidence as to where he was born and when he lived and flourished, there is little doubt of his being an historical personage, "and one who had wit to take advantage of the times in which he lived," and whose quicker wit and boldness saw through the superstitious fears of his countrymen and laughed at them.

This quickness of wit and boldness of conception, this

superiority to those around him, met with the not unusual reward of his being exalted into a wizard and of having dealings with the devil. Nay, like others, he, too, must have an attendant devil; and Mephistopheles was called in early to serve him as a valet, and to transport him, for a due consideration, whither he chose, and as rapidly as possible. Thus he travels round the world in eight days, and sees all the glories, riches, and wonders thereof.

So singular a story seems to have at once seized on the popular mind. It was quickly dramatized in Germany, and presented with the other monkish legends and plays; and in thirty years from the time our own Marlowe had formed upon it a splendid work which had been acted with applause. Since that time, nearly fifty different poems and dramas have been built upon the story—two of the best, excepting, of course, Goethe's, being by Klingemann and Roder. Lastly, Goethe elaborates it into the most remarkable fiction of modern times, and one which is the chief corner-stone of his fame. A writer would, one might suppose, as soon think of re-writing *Hamlet* as of rehabilitating "Faust;" but, notwithstanding that we have thirty-three translations of Goethe's great work, a modern English poet, James Philip Bailey, has dared it in *Festus*, and has spasmodically succeeded; and a modern playwright has yet more recently put the subject on the boards of the Princess's Theatre as *Faust and Marguerite*. What we now propose is, to give the old legend, with some of its blunt English padding, referring now and then to "Marlowe's mighty line," to point out what people miss

who neglect our elder dramatists. Marlowe had indeed a method of throwing ten syllables together in a way as forcible and as original as any master of blank verse that ever lived. Dryden, a great writer, comes somewhat near him in force; Webster and Dekker still more closely in rough and ponderous weight; Milton in majestic diction and splendid energy: but no one combines all so much as Marlowe himself in his best verses.

But to return to our Doctor. The author of one of these little histories begins with a sage remark upon the difference between ignorance and knowledge; and, after the good old manner of Pinnock in his histories, he dabs about ten lines of very bald verse on the top of his chapter, which he afterwards translates into prose, to the effect that we should not attempt to know too much, "as the events about to be recorded in this history will, in our opinion, unless we greatly err, fully evince." John Faustus, he continues, was born in a small hamlet, in the province of Wiemar: his father was a poor labouring man, but his uncle, who lived at Wittenberg, "took the young Faustus and adopted him, and made him heir to his property. Thus, instead of being doomed to follow at the plough tail, to work early and late, and to live upon the most homely fare, our hero was destined to bask in the sunshine of affluence, to tread the flowery meads of learning, to drink at the immortal fount, to climb Helicon's bank, and thereby to reach the temple of fame. Young Faustus, now become the favourite of his uncle, *who had a good living in his gift*, was sent to study divinity at Wittenberg, the same place at which

'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark' was educated, and which is rendered immortal by the pen of our unmatched Shakspeare."

The "good living" originated of course from the hand of our English chap-book maker; but all authorities agree that Faust went to Wittenberg. "Son oncle, qui demeura à Wittenberg," says a French author; and an old ballad in one of the four thick squat volumes of nearly 1300 pages each, which Scheible has published in *Das Kloster*, opens with the following verses—

Es ist der Doctor Faustus nun
Gewesen eines Bauren Sun:
Zu Rodt ben Weinmar bürtig her,
Zu Wittemberg so hat auch er
Ein Freundschafft gross; &c. &c.

At this place "he prosecuted his studies until he had exhausted the stores of learning; he regularly passed" all the various minor academical degrees with credit to himself and honour to his tutors, and "was *inducted into his uncle's living*, and looked up to as a most impressive and orthodox preacher." But, alas!—

The devil cunningly prepares,
And for his victims spreads his snares;
Thus Faustus in a luckless hour
Submitted was to Satan's power.

The fact was, he "consorted with alchemists, a herd of impostors, the disgrace of the age;" and, determining to be the top of the tree, he consulted his oracles, wherein he "found it was requisite to undergo a probation of forty days, during which he must five times every day invoke the

Prince of Darkness, trample on the Bible, seclude himself from society, and drink morning and evening, repeating his diabolical lessons, two spoonfuls of Devil's soup; he drew a magical circle on the floor, then set with diligence getting together the materials of his infernal diet. . . . With no common degree of fortitude, he began to rummage the churchyards for bones of a particular description, in the hollows of which worms of a peculiar shape and colour had engendered; he then procured newts of a month old, the eyes of dead brindled sows, eagles' eggs with five black spots on them, hoofs of cows that had died of the murrain, heads and legs of toads, spawn of frogs, genitals of scorpions, tongues of crocodiles, livers of male black rats, toes of nightingales, brains of white boars above three years old, and spurs of game cocks; the whole of this was boiled to a consistence with whale's sperm and snails, to which he added every morning seventy-three drops of his own blood, taken from his left arm by himself"! Having concocted this devilish potion, which certainly by far exceeds the milder concoction in Middleton's *Witch* or Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, he in all things conformed himself to his "probationary state, tearing Bibles to pieces, and treading the scattered leaves under his feet. He soon knew that he was rapidly advancing to his desired aim, and having covered his head with a woollen cap, on which was painted a skull and cross-bones, together with a figure of the devil, he began to invoke the devil in Low Dutch."

The next few pages of this imaginative history are filled with a description which would very well suit the

celebrated scene in *Der Freischütz.* Faustus is surrounded by all kinds of terrors. He drinks the soup, and dances on the leaves of the Bible; he hears the very thunders of Hell, sees a frightful dragon with a "three-pronged pitch-fork," a hare chasing a lion, a hyena swallowing little children, and a little man with a cocked hat, who says, "Friend Faustus, my master, Lucifer, has sent me here to ask what wantest thou?" to whom Faustus truculently replies that "he wants his master, and would see him, if he were buried in fifty hells deeper than he is." The messenger disappears, the hurly-burly recommences, and a great ball of fire runs round and round the circle with incredible velocity, from which a voice of thunder cries out, "Mortal, what wantest thou?" The Doctor, nothing daunted, "recruited himself with a spoonful of soup," and challenged the Devil to come forth, upon which the ball of fire opens, and Beelzebub enters on the scene.

The clever Doctor fancied that he had outwitted the Prince of Darkness, for, when the latter asked him to be his, "body and soul," for ever, Faustus said, "Nay, I will not; I will have all I desire of thee, but will not be damned." Upon the Fiend putting this little matter in the right way, he receives the skin of a human body; upon which he agrees to make out certain requisitions, and a conveyance of his body and soul to the Devil. He goes home to his study, and diligently draws out these articles, of which there are nine. The Devil is to be at his command, to do his bidding, to give him exhaustless wealth, to render him invisible, to convey him anywhere in one moment, to

raise the dead or bring before him any living person, to show him the interior of hell, and, finally, "to lay aside his devilish propensity for lying, and when questioned tell me nothing but the truth.

(Signed) JOHN FAUSTUS."

The Devil soon, in an awful clap of thunder, sends up a series of replies, in which the chief requisitions are granted, but in which the last assertion is very positively denied:— "I will answer all your questions truly: the world does me injustice to tax me with want of veracity; let them ask their conscience if I ever deceived them, or made them believe a bad action was a good one?" A shrewd question truly!

"Moreover" (the deed concludes) "I hereby promise to let my trusty servant, Mephistopheles, be ever at your call, and further, allow you twenty-four years to enjoy the privileges purchased at so dear a rate.

"Signed, by order of Lucifer, Prince of the Hellish Regions; by us, Judges of his Infernal Domain; and in his name we say Amen, it shall be so.

"RHADAMANTHUS.
"MINOS.
"ÆACUS."

Here, again, is that mixture of Paganism with modern belief which seems so necessary for the poet. We should scarcely have dreamt of the Homeric and Virgilian judges serving under the Hebraic Satan. *Que voulez-vous?* there are none other witnesses at hand. The bonds being ex-

changed, Mephistopheles is assigned to Faustus. He presents his new master with one of the keys of Hell, saying:—"Take this: its possession is a favour never before granted to mortal. Whenever you wish to see me, if you hold up this key above your head, and say, *Glishmaramoth Teufel*, I shall instantly appear in the shape you now see me;" which was that of a dapper little man dressed in black, very much like a French abbé. Next we find related many of the doings of Faustus, scarcely worth repeating. He was, we are told, a man of some humour; and he shows it much in the same manner as some of our fast young men would do. He set all the cocks in Wittenberg crowing for three hours without intermission, and once, "just as the parson had mounted the pulpit," got all the pigs within six miles to come to church—such a grunting and squeaking being never before heard. Many of these tricks we must put down to the English fancy of the poor scribe who vamped up this book. One day he makes all the old maids of Wittenberg, "each with a penny pie and a tabby cat," walk on one side of the street, and the old bachelors on the other. At another time, "at a grand levée held by the Emperor of China," all the Mandarins and nobles began hissing at and thumping each other; and when the Emperor blew his nose, he blew out—not his brains, as the American story has it—but nothing but butterflies and worms. Faustus sets the "Great Mogul" and all his court sneezing; and at a sumptuous repast given to the Emperor of Persia he causes all the wine to flow from decanter to glass continually. He makes almanacs—here we are reminded of

the Doctor—and is more successful than our own Professor Murphy; for what he predicted, rain, hail, frost, or snow, invariably occurred. He wishes to marry, but a fiend with a fearful name, "Ghasthomio," gives him such a whipping with hot wires and scorpions that he repents. Marriage, the fiend says, is a holy state, but yet he may have his desire in another way. He asks where Hell is, and receives in the answer a curious *mélange* of the Hebrew Gehenna and the classic Tartarus. It is probable that we never shall escape the bondage of these ideas: even the wonderful imagination of Dante is constrained to adopt them. But the splendid diction and the atmosphere of Protestant thought in which Marlowe lived saved him from this; and to the same question Mephistopheles replies with a fine anticipation of that subjective view of Hell of which we have a good deal at present:—

> Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
> In one self place; but where we are is hell;
> And where hell is there must we ever be.
> And, to be short, when all the world dissolves,
> And every creature shall be purified,
> All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

"I think there be no such place as hell," says Faustus, superciliously; and his attendant is glad that he thinks so till he is fully entrapped. Mr. George Borrow indeed makes the Devil turn the tables on man, and say, with some humour, as the concluding sentence of his ghastly book:—"When men wish to represent anything abominable, they paint the Devil; let us, therefore, in revenge, when

we wish to represent anything infamous, depict man; and philosophers, popes, priests, conquerors, ministers, and *authors* (!) shall serve us as models."

Hell is, however, not long a matter of doubt to the Doctor, for he visits it; while, previously to this visit, Mephistopheles had described it thus:—"My Faustus, knowe that Hell is, as thou wouldest thinke with thy selfe, another world, in the which we have our being, under the earth, and above the earth, even to the heavens, within the circumference whereof are contained ten kingdomes—namely,

1. Lacus Mortis.
2. Stagnum Ignis.
3. Terra tenebrosa.
4. Tartarus.
5. Terra oblivionis.
6. Gehenna.
7. Herebus.
8. Barathrum.
9. Styx.
10. Acheron.

The which kingdomes are governed by five kings—that is, *Lucifer* in the *Orient; Belial* in *Meridie; Astaroth* in *Occidente;* and *Phlegethon* in the middest of them all: whose rule and dominions have none end until the day of Dome. And thus farre, Faustus, hast thou heard of our rule and kingdomes."

We do not, in the old legends, find many hints towards the wonderful scenes which Goethe has created. The tricks of Faustus are clumsy and countrified, and on a par with the stories related in the "Hundred Merry Tales of Shakespeare." Of the wonderful scene in the cellar, illustrated finely by Retzsch, and our own painter, Theodore von Holst, there is this mere skeleton:—

"How Faustus serued the dronken Clownes.

"Dr. Faustus went into an Inne, wherein were many tables full of Clownes, the which were tippling kan after kan of excellent wine, and to bee short they were all dronken, and as they sate so they sung and hallowed, that one could not heare a man speake for them; this angred Doctor Faustus; wherefore he said to those that called him in, marke my masters I will shew you a merry jest. The clownes continuing still hallowing and singing, he so conjured them, that theire mouthes stood as wide open as it was possible for them to holde them, and never a one of them was able to close his mouthe again: by and by the noyse was gone, the clownes not withstanding looked earnestly one upon another, and wist not what was happened; wherefore one by one they went out, and so soon as they came without they were as well as ever they were; but none of them desired to goe in any more."

This scene our English dramatist has followed, making each clown close his sentence with a filthy *double entendre*, no doubt for the purpose of tickling the ears of the groundlings. He also makes "Fayre Helena" of Greece the mistress of the Doctor; "for," says R. P. Gent, "she was so beautifull and delightful a peece that Faustus could not bear to be one moment out of her sight." The German poem has a canto, the twenty-sixth,—

"Von der Helena aus Grichenland;"

and, indeed, so alluring a subject was not likely to be

omitted by the book-makers. It is found in almost all the copies. Helen bears him a son, called Justus Faustus, but he, being a *succubus*, disappears with his phantom mother. Here is the picture of the fair Helena, showed by Faustus to the students: "This lady appeared before them in a most rich gown of purple velvet, costly embroidered; her hair hanging down loose, as fair as the beaten gold, and of such length that it reached down to her hams; having most amorous cole-black eyes; a sweet and pleasant round face, with lips as red as any cherry; her cheeks of a rose colour, her mouth small, her neck white as a swan; tall and slender of personage; in sum, there was no imperfect place in her; she looked round about her with a rolling hawk's eye, a smiling and wanton countenance, which near hand inflamed the hearts of all the students, but that they persuaded themselves she was a spirit, which made them lightly pass away such fancies."

Very beautifully has Marlowe dramatised this scene of the legend. Helen is made one of the instruments of the fall of Faustus, and of his temptation by Mephistopheles; and, indeed, the German doctor, upon the sight of this instrument of temptation, falls into a love ecstasy, and utters one of the most ardent and enthusiastic rhapsodies on beauty that was ever conceived.

> "Was this fair Helen whose admired worth
> Made Greece with ten years' war afflict poor Troy?"

asks the second scholar when he sees her; but the Doctor speaks not so tamely.

"Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul! see where it flies;
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in those lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy shall Wittenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest.
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air,
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter,
When he appear'd to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky,
In wanton Arethusa's azure arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!"

It is worth our while here to glance at the following portions of a ballad, Roxburghe Collection (vol. iii. p. 280), which Mr. Thoms supposes may be a modernized version of one of 1588, "A Ballad of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, the great *congerer*," licensed to be printed by the learned Aylmer, Bishop of London, and which it has been pointed out is very little more than an English version of the German Metrical Volksbuch, put forward at Tubingen by Alexander Hock, in the same year. The English ballad, of which we have printed a few verses, was sung to the tune of *Fortune my Foe*, a very popular one at the end of the sixteenth century.

The Just Judgment of God shew'd upon Dr. Faustus.

All Christian men give ear a while to me,
How I am plung'd in pain but cannot see:
I liv'd a life the like did none before,
Forsaking Christ, and I am damn'd therefore.

At Wertemburgh, a town in Germany,
There was I born and bred of good degree,
Of honest stock, which afterwards I sham'd,
Accurst therefore, for *Faustus* was I nam'd.

In learning high my uncle brought up me,
And made me Doctor of Divinity:
And when he dy'd he left me all his wealth,
Which cursed gold did hinder my soul's health.

Then did I shun the Holy Bible book,
Nor on God's word would never after look;
But studied the accursed conjuration,
Which was the cause of my utter damnation.

* * * * * *

At last, when I had but one hour to come,
I turn'd the glass for my last hour to run:
And called in learned men to comfort me,
But Faith was gone, and none could succour me.

* * * * * *

Then presently they came unto the hall,
Whereas my brains were cast against the wall;
Both arms and legs in pieces they did see,
My bowels gone, there was an end of me.

You conjurors and damned witches all,
Example take by my unhappy fall:
Give not your souls and bodies unto hell,
See that the smallest hair you do not sell.

But hope in Christ his kingdom you may gain,
Where you shall never fear such mortal pain;
Forsake the Devil, and all his crafty ways,
Embrace true Faith that never more decays.

In the Faustus of George Borrow, which is a wild revengeful satire on Popes, Protestants, Kings, People, and Authors, we find that the Doctor visits England—nay, indeed, that he is more disgusted with our country than with any other. "Not all the charms of the blooming Englishwomen could keep him any longer in this cursed isle, which he quitted with hatred and disgust, for neither in France nor in Germany had he seen crimes committed with so much coolness and impunity." As they leave the island, the Devil vents a prophecy and gives an opinion on us English which, seeing that it is well to be despised of the Devil, one may venture to extract:—

"These people will groan for a time beneath the yoke of despotism, they will then sacrifice one of their kings on the scaffold of freedom, in order that they may sell themselves to his successor for gold and titles. In hell there is very little respect paid to these gloomy islanders, who would suck the marrow from all the putrid carcases in the universe if they thought they could find gold in the bones. They boast of their morality and despise all nations, yet if you were to place what you call virtue in one scale, and vice with twopence in the other, they would forget their morality and pocket the money. They talk of their honour and integrity, but never enter into a treaty without a firm resolution of breaking it, as soon as a farthing can

be gained by so doing. After death they inhabit the most pestilential marsh in the kingdom of darkness, and their souls are scourged without mercy. None of the other damned will have anything to do with them. If the inhabitants of the continent could do without sugar and coffee, the sons of proud England would soon return to the state in which they were when Julius Cæsar, Canute of Denmark, and William the Conqueror did them the honour to invade them."

Faustus visits the planets, and in Venus amongst other curiosities meets with women who do not spoil their figures by bearing children, but depositing eggs in the sun so hatch them. The Doctor runs through the usual vicious, foolish course, but at last the twenty-four years expire, and Mephistopheles in a jovial humour thus accosts him:—

"Come, my Faustus, you have had your career, and a lewd and merry one it has been; do not act the coward at the end."

Which request is indeed of no more comfort than Jack Ketch offered to a highwayman. The Doctor, seeing no escape, gives a grand banquet, tells his friends his fate, and—

"As the clock struck twelve, the Devil and Gasthomio appeared; Faustus made a stout resistance, uttering the most piercing cries, but the demons soon mastered him; when the latter, taking him upon his pitchfork, flew away with him in a storm of thunder and lightning."

After this very bare prose, the poetry of Marlowe must

strike everyone. When about to die, the Faustus of this great play utters this fine soliloquy:—

> O Faustus!
> Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
> And then thou must be damned perpetually.
> Stand still, thou ever moving spheres of heaven,
> That time may cease and midnight never come;
> Fair nature's eye rise, rise again and make
> Perpetual day; or let this hour be but a year,
> A month, a week, a natural day,
> That Faustus may repent and save his soul.
> *O lente lente currite noctis equi!*
> The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
> The Devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.

Then follows a scene of wonderful horror, extracted in the "Dramatic Specimens" of Charles Lamb, who speaks of it with a delicate and sweet appreciation. The soul of Faustus is borne away; and in the morning the scholars find in his study his mangled limbs, which they gather up for decent burial, and as they go out the solemn chorus pronounces his epitaph:—

> Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
> And burned is Apollo's laurel bough
> That some time grew within this learned man.
> Faustus is gone; regard his hellish fall
> Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
> Only to wonder at unlawful things,
> Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits,
> To practise more than heavenly power permits.

Such is the story of our English Faustus. The legend in Germany seems so suited to the Teutonic mind that it

will never be forgotten. The amount of literature, critical, descriptive, or romantic, expended on the legend is in itself prodigious. It seems that, as an embodiment of the history of one who yielded to temptation and finally paid the penalty of his weakness and wickedness, the story is admirably suited for the purposes of the satirist or the moralist, while the variety of scenes and the vast scope given for the working of the machinery of the romance have been at once perceived by the inventive and poetic minds of every age. Hence, starting from almost fresh standpoints, Goethe and Bailey have, in Faust and Festus, produced poems each of which bears not only the impress of the author's mind, but also of the age in which he lived. "The intended theme of Goethe's Faust," says Coleridge, "is the consequences of a misology, or hatred and depreciation of knowledge caused by an originally intense thirst for knowledge baffled. But a love of knowledge for itself, and pure ends would never produce such misology, but only a love of it for base and unworthy purposes." Thus philosophically viewing the great cause, it is not to be wondered at, that before Coleridge had seen any part of Goethe's Faust,* though of course when I was familiar enough with Marlowe's, I conceived and drew up the plan of a drama which was to be, to my mind, what the Faust was to Goethe's. My Faust was old Michael

* "The poem was first published in 1790, and forms the commencement of the seventh volume of Goethe's *Schriften, Wien und Leipzig, bey S. Stael und G. J. Goschen,* 1790."—*Coleridge's Note.*

Scott; a much better and more likely original than Faust." Coleridge then enters into a sketch of his plot, and the similarity between it and that of Goethe is remarkable. His hero does not love knowledge for itself—for its own exceeding great reward, but in order to be powerful. "This poison speck infects his mind from the beginning." Alas, a poison speck infecting too many minds. Imprisoned by the priests, and as he feels unjustly, for five years, he eventually escapes and begins his great revenge. He turns to witchcraft, and at last tries to raise the devil, and the devil comes at his call. "My devil," writes Coleridge, "was to be, like Goethe's, the universal humourist, who should make all things vain and nothing worth, by a perpetual collation of the great with the little in the presence of the Infinite. I had many a trick for him to play, some better, I think, than any in Faust." In the meantime Michael is miserable, power does not bring happiness, and he has to keep the devil perpetually employed by imposing the most extravagant tasks, but one thing is to the devil as easy as another. "What next Michael? is repeated every day with the most imperious servility." In the end Coleridge had made Michael Scott triumphant, and "poured peace into his soul in the conviction of salvation to sinners through God's grace."

Many are the works projected or dreamt of by the fertile brains of English authors, the non-completion of which we have sadly to regret, and not the least to be deplored is this intended drama of Coleridge. One remark its study has won for us which is worth pondering; his devil "makes

all things vain and nothing worth by a perpetual collation of the great with the small in the presence of the Infinite." This is an old and yet ever new trick of the would-be philosophical sneerers, and no one could have better exposed the sophistry of those who use it than Coleridge. But it is by no means yet played out; indeed we may imagine that in succeeding centuries Dr. Johann Faustus will oft start up, a fine modern gentleman, with old-new sneers at the priesthood, at a belief in goodness, virtue, and God; and that Mephistopheles, shaped according to the fashion of the times, will captivate the minds of poetic youth, by his bold wickedness, his hardihood towards the Almighty, and his contempt of the creature of whose damnation he is the agent.

As we look in the British Museum at the beautiful type, ink, and printing of the Mazarine Bible, so difficult to an unpractised eye to be distinguished from a manuscript, which was the first production of Gutenberg and Johann Faust, we can understand why the puzzled scribes and illuminators put their heads together to slander the producer. Not comprehending his process, they must have believed that the Devil aided one who could produce one hundred bibles or psalters in less than half the time in which they could produce one. May we not, then, fairly suppose that, after all, the printer and not the Doctor was the nucleus around which the most enticing fable of modern times has been gathered? Two facts are certain—both the Fausts lived about the same period, and both bore the same Christian name.

QUEVEDO.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

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Bouterwek's (Fred.) History of Spanish Literature. Bogue, 1847.

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History of Spanish Literature, with Criticisms on particular Works, &c. By George Ticknor. Vol. II. New Edition. John Murray, 1855.

The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, Knight of the Order of St. James. Made English by Sir Roger L'Estrange, Knt. The 11th edition corrected. London, printed by W. B. for Richard Saie, near Grays-Inn Gate in Holbourn, 1715. (5th edition, G. R. L., in 1673.)

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The Controversy about Resistance and Non-resistance discussed in Moral and Political Reflections on Marcus Brutus, who slew Julius Cæsar. Written in Spanish by D. F. de Q. V. Translated into English and published in defence of Dr. Henry Sacheverel, by order of a noble lord who voted in his behalf. London, 1710.

Obras de D. Francisco Quevedo-Villegas Coleccion completa, corrigeda ordenadà é illustrata por Don A. Fernandez Gueira y Orbe (Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles.) Tom, 22, &c. 1849.

Obras Escogidas de D. F. de Quevedo y Villegas, con notas y una noticia de su vida y escritos por Don Eugenio de Ochoa. Paris. *Obras serias, obras jocosas, obras poéticas.* 1842.

QUEVEDO.

A. D. 1580—1645.

OF all the weapons of the human intellect satire is perhaps the keenest and that which inspires the most dread. Of all, also, its effects have been the widest and the most beneficial. Happily for us, none but good men have been supremely gifted with this tremendous power. We do not say that Aristophanes, Horace, Terence, Persius, or Juvenal were the *best* of men; or that, speaking of modern times, Rabelais, Cervantes, Quevedo, Swift, Pope, or Molière were saints. *Sancti*, holy men, that sense of the word will not hold with them; nay, even if judged by the highest possible standard of excellence, they were but frail and faulty men; as weak as some of those whom they condemned: but we do think that they, like David, had continual impulses towards wisdom, goodness, and truth; that they often embraced these impulses, and that they maintained a very high standard of honesty through poverty and persecution; that they possessed a courage

which never gave way; a spirit and a sense of their own dignity which kept them from being base; an ever-recurring love of truth and nature; a belief in the beauty of humanity, and a wonderful boldness, which constantly urged them to speak out and smite dishonesty, impurity, and baseness, even in high places and in the breasts of the great and powerful of the world. Without these feelings, which have of themselves something of the heroic, a true satirist cannot exist; for a satirist is not to be degraded to the rank of a scandal-monger, who retails the stories of a village, or the *faux pas* of a court: but he is to be regarded as a large-souled well-wisher to humanity, who, speaking the truth with sharp severity, places it in that light which, if it pains the guilty, yet awakens him to the enormity of his villanies, and makes him hate the crime which he has hitherto loved.

It has happened, however, by a natural consequence, that satire is the most dangerous of all weapons to him who uses it. It is a hiltless sword which, though it pierces the antagonist, cuts the hands of him who wields it. A turn for satire verse has ruined more poets than one. The truth itself does not please at all times, and it is certain that truth, sharply told, always wounds. If from the lips of Divinity it could only urge those who heard it to ensnare and slay the speaker, we may be sure that from the mouth of mortality its proximate effects must be the same. We find this in every case. Defoe imprisoned and driven half mad; Swift in disgrace breaking his proud heart; Rabelais forced to conceal his ideas

amidst filth and zanyism; Cervantes begging his bread; Fielding without a friend, Quevedo in a dungeon. Well may Johnson break forth into strong melancholy verse in his imitation of Juvenal; well may he enumerate nothing but miseries, as he cries out—

> What various ills the scholars life assail,
> Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.

This incessant toil and thought beget little success; then comes the pale envy and the biting cares; then the degradation of seeking a patron; and lastly, the sad end—the patron, and the jail. In the life which is before us we shall find these wayside marks precisely in the succession in which the noble verse of Johnson has placed them.

The literature of the Spaniards is but imperfectly known to many Englishmen. A great name has overshadowed a host of inferior, but of excellent writers. Cervantes is popular and appreciated, but Calderon, Lope de Vega, Garcilasco, Ponce de Leon, and Quevedo, authors every one of them worthy of study, are known but by name. It is to the history and great work of the latter that we wish to direct attention.

The era of Philip the Second of Spain resembled, in too many respects, our own. Catholicism and that shade worshipped by enthusiasts, monkish devotees, Catholic unity, were rampant. The question of the Immaculate Conception would, if then propounded, have been settled by a Bull. The Inquisition flourished in all its glory (?), and superstition and luxury went, as they always will and

do, hand in hand. The latter vice bore, perhaps, the largest flower, for it had been sown in rich ground, and the treasures of the conquered Indies, the pearls and gold of Mexico, and the silver of Peru, were poured like liquid manure to nourish its root. The throne of Spain was, at that time, the richest in the world, its court or courts the most luxurious and debauched. We say courts advisedly. It had one at Peru, another at Mexico, a third in Sicily, a fourth at Naples, and each viceroy tried to outvie his fellows in show, pomp, and bravery. The manners and morals of these courts had corrupted the old institutions of the descendants of the Cid. There were too much ease and luxury, too much gold, too much grandeur; the country presented all those signs of decadence which M. Ledru Rollin had seen in England, and which M. de Montalembert has endeavoured to explain away. The nobles presented little but vanity, idleness, intrigue, love of precedent, ceremony, and contempt for the feelings of the people. Moral sense was all but extinguished: riches alone were worshipped. The throne was merely the altar of an empty idol, of a monarchy weakened and buried in superstition, and covered by the contempt of all who were noble, good, or free. Favourites reigned, and the basest dispensed favours from the polluted but still worshipped "Fountain of Honour."

Abroad, in the country, the same signs presented themselves. The artisan was poor and degraded, the peasant crushed and ignorant, the money-lender flourishing and rich; gamblers and speculators in plenty, the intriguer

sure of his fortune, tax-gatherers and farmers-general fattening on the gains of iniquity, the exchequer of the state beggared, the middle classes and lower aristocracy poverty stricken, and ready to sell their daughters—either through the Church or without her intervention—to him, not who loved them most, but who had the strongest arm or the longest purse. It is the old history of downfalls. Rome presented the same signs, and farther back Egypt and Assyria could, did we know all, tell the same story.

But these signs are not beheld with perfect placidity by all. However blind a government or a nation may be, there are those whose hearts are pure, and whose vision is keen; those who would seek to stay her in her downward course. Unfortunately the mass is too blind and foolish, the people perish for lack of knowledge, the reins are in the hands of those who are desperate and wicked, and they who would check the mad career are mocked at like Lot, or deemed mad like Cassandra. Quevedo was one of these.

The lives of men, such as he was, are often much more romantic than romance itself, so that the apothegm of Lord Byron, anent truth being strange, stranger than fiction, is completely verified. "If you wish for a romance," cries a French editor of one of Quevedo's works, "you shall have one,"—a romance, indeed, dramatic enough, but sad, deep, and strange as a tragedy by Æschylus.

Don Francisco Gomez de Quevedo of Villegas was born at Madrid in the year 1580. His family, which was, as

every Spaniard's is, illustrious in its descent, had been attached to the court, and its members had held several appointments. Both the parents of the future satirist died whilst he was young; but his relative and guardian, Don Jerome de Villanueva, placed him in the university of Alcala, where he made rapid progress, making himself to be regarded as a perfect prodigy of learning; knowing Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Italian, and French. Nor were his studies ended here: he dipped—for to have mastered all these thoroughly is beyond mortal power—into the studies of theology, law, philosophy, the belles lettres, natural philosophy, and medicine. No wonder is it that his college was proud of him, and that the fondness of his admirers gifted him also with every accomplishment which could be possessed by the finest cavalier and gentleman in the world. In history and biography, just as in the commencement of inartistic novels, we often find the writers carried away by an intense admiration of their heroes. The character of the admirable Crichton seems to suit every one. Thus our quaint little Quevedo, with a perpetually active brain, a malformation in his feet, which renders walking or any martial exercise painful to him, but with the pride of a high-born Spaniard, is not only represented as a learned philosopher, but as "an arbiter in disputed points of honour, preserving with the greatest delicacy the parties who consulted him from any compromise of character, highly accomplished in arms, and possessing a courage and an address beyond that of the most skilful masters." Thus far M. de Sismondi, who does

not forget an editorial flourish about "the sanguinary ordeal," meaning, we presume, if he mean anything, that Quevedo was an accomplished duellist, and in addition to his other acquirements, knew the "punto reverso, the stocata," and all the practice and terms of an art which taught him to wield his long Spanish rapier, with its channelled blade, quite as skilfully as he did his pen.

The reason for all this, which we cannot but regard as exaggeration, follows. The high souled little man, full of courage and chivalry, being a poet, and a Spaniard to boot, walking along the streets of Madrid, is attracted by the cries of a woman in distress. Rushing to the spot, he finds a lady struggling with a burly cavalier; he rescues her, draws his sword, has a few hurried passes, probably with one who knew but ill how to defend himself, and leaves the lady free, but his adversary, by an unlucky lunge, dead in those midnight streets of Madrid. Quevedo, sheathing his bloody rapier, and bending down over the body, turns the dying man to the moonlight, and recognizes the face of one of the most powerful nobles of Spain. One glance is enough for him. Henceforth, adieu the reputation of the scholar and the poet: welcome that of the duellist and brawler: he has killed his man, and must fly. With a strange pang at his heart, a deep regret, relieved perhaps a little by the thought that this misfortune arose in his defence of a lady, who will, we may be sure, hereafter defend his reputation, Quevedo gets him gone, and flies to Messina; the Duke d'Ossuna,

whom he slightly knew, having been appointed Viceroy of Sicily, and holding grand court therein.

To a man of wit, learning, and skill, this forced retirement was not so much a banishment as the beginning of his fortunes. The fame of Quevedo had preceded him; and either at that court, remote from the capital, was preserved the ancient virtue of giving places to men who really could fill them, or the friendship of the Duke d'Ossuna prevailed, and Quevedo suddenly mounted into the seat of the secretary. The skill and wisdom of the man soon became apparent. He was, in a little space, the very right-hand of the Duke. He travelled from Genoa to Nice, from Nice to Venice, from Venice to Madrid, from Palermo to Rome, carrying on important negotiations, charged with dozens of state secrets, and with affairs of state, all of which he skilfully executed. His life, as the life of such a man in such a time naturally would be, was filled with adventures. At Nice, being in possession of a state secret, he suddenly freighted a ship and saved the family of his host, who had been proscribed by the Prince Charles Emanuel. At Venice he became not only a witness, but an actor, in that pretended conspiracy against the senate which furnished our poet Otway with the plot of his tragedy, "*Venice Preserved.*" History has hitherto believed in the actual existence of the plot, not of the tragedy, but of the Spaniards against Venice; but M. Guerra y Orbe has proved, from authentic sources, that the conspiracy only existed in the cunning brains of the Venetian senators. The truth seems

to be that the seignory, doubting and mistrusting the influence which Spain was acquiring in her state affairs, imagined a cabal, found ready dupes, spies, and denouncers; imprisoned in oubliettes, or assassinated, or cast into the sea, all to whom their secrets were known, kept amongst themselves a most profound silence, and left, in the face of Europe, Spain and the Duke d'Ossuna guilty of an abortive and odious conspiracy, thus rendering free their state from further foreign influence, and finding throughout the whole of Europe a generous and simple credence, and in Fra Paolo a slavish and complaisant historian. Such is one of the curiosities of history which time and patient research bring to light! But such is the power of genius over truth, that it is not more certain that Macbeth will be judged from the pen of Shakespeare, and that Richard the Third will be ever regarded as a demi-devil rather than a skilful and humane governor, than that the sorrows of Belvidera and the woes of Jaffier and Pierre will draw innumerable tears from yet unborn audiences, and will, as heretofore, excite the hatred of the English against the pride and treachery of Spain.

We may be assured that Quevedo, the chief secretary of the Duke d'Ossuna, shared in his disgrace. The secretary had to fly from Venice as a beggar. He reached Naples to find his master and friend, to aid, and at last to tire him with his good counsels, and to be dismissed. Not long afterwards d'Ossuna was disgraced himself, lost his vice-royalty, and died, perhaps, of pride and a broken heart. Olivarez succeeded him.

The good fortune of Quevedo, not less than his skill and genius, made him many enemies. He was besides more pleasing to the ladies of the court than he was hateful to the nobles. He somehow acquired the name of a man of gallantry. To be so in the sixteenth century, and in Spain, was to play a very dangerous game. The State of Venice paid many an assassin to track the clever secretary, and whether by land or by sea, the biographer of Quevedo assures us his life was in danger from the dagger of a bravo paid either by some jealous husband or some Italian lord: all these dangers the satirist escaped, survived the Duke d'Ossuna, and lived to refuse a proffered secretaryship from Olivarez.

It is probable that these years, free from business and the intrigues of court, were the happiest which Quevedo boasted. He fell in love with a lady whose name was Esperanza, wrote poetry to her, playing gently and prettily on the signification of her name, was crowned with success, married, and, after a year of great happiness, lost, as he has told us, in admirable and affecting verses, his only "hope." This misfortune probably made him turn with more avidity than ever to that which had amused him in his prosperity. He published some of his poems, and wrote others. He must have done this largely and at leisure; for his poetical works fill three large volumes, and contain, besides other specimens, upwards of one thousand sonnets, some of them of great power and beauty. One of them cited by Sismondi, and we believe translated (in Bohn's edition) by Wiffen, the translator of Tasso, will charm the reader by its sombre beauty.

A Roma sepultada en sus ruinas.
Buscas en Roma à Roma ô peregrino! &c.

Stranger, 'tis vain! midst Rome thou seek'st for Rome
In vain; thy foot is on her throne—her grave:
Her walls are dust; Time's conquering banners wave
O'er all her hills; hills which themselves entomb.
Yea! the proud Aventine is its own womb;
The royal Palatine is ruin's slave;
And medals, mouldering trophies of the brave,
Mark but the triumphs of oblivious gloom.
Tiber **alone endures, whose ancient tide**
Worshipped the Queen of Cities on her throne,
And now, as round her sepulchre, complains.
O Rome! the stedfast grandeur of thy pride
And beauty, all is fled; ***and that alone***
Which seemed so fleet and fugitive remains!

Few sonnets in any language, it seems to us, can surpass this in melancholy and reflective grandeur.

Next to his sonnets the larger portion of poems which Quevedo has given us consists of what he calls "romances." They are, indeed, short stanzas, and resemble nothing in the English language, unless it be those biting verses of Swift on his own death, or the more playful melancholy and irony of Hood. He is very fond of subjecting his own fortune to the microscope, and he examines and turns it over with such quaint reflections, such good-humoured philosophy, that we cannot help at once loving and admiring the man. We shall shortly have to revert to one of these "romances:" at present, we must follow the history of the author.

His pursuit of literature, which—such was the nature

of the man—could not but with him be very earnest, brought him into contact with many of the pseudo-littérateurs of the day. It has always been the fate of men of satiric genius to make enemies amongst their own craft, and, as Quevedo did not hesitate to attack and blame those who were ridiculous and vicious in their style, he soon had a host of enemies amongst the poets. A school had been formed about this time, that is, from 1615 to 1621, the style of which was full of false sentiments, long words, and hyperbole. It seems to us to have been the prototype of that Della Cruscan nonsense which Gifford in our fathers' days destroyed by his Baviad and Mæviad. Gongora and Marini were at the head of this regiment of false poets, and as in Spain when the Inquisition flourished it was no difficult thing to attack a man's faith, some ridiculous disputes about the patron saint of Spain were foisted into the quarrel; and Quevedo, attacked on all sides, succumbed to his enemies. An old inquisitor, Aliaga, the poet and painter Pacheco, and a "Gongorist" Montalvan, joined their forces, and between them manufactured a book full of bitterness and scandal, purposing to bring to light the secret life of Quevedo, wherein they dub him a "heretic, a thief, a robber, a liar without faith, honesty, or character; a debauchee spotted over with vices." Many of these qualities have been imputed to Quevedo by his biographers, but it does not appear by what authority, if we except that of this slanderous book. The "thief" and "heretic" was, at the very time of this slander, meditating a noble and bold deed. The king-

dom was exhausted, the treasury empty, national industry discouraged, the priests rampant, the king in a state of servitude, the favourites in full possession of every power they could wish, quietly pocketing the finances and fattening upon the falling state. Quevedo, with a simplicity which is naturally ever the concomitant of enthusiasm, believed in the king, and contrived to place under his plate at dinner a copy of verses, folded into the form of a petition, which revealed these crimes and suggested a remedy. These verses were without insolence or irony, perhaps without much polish or epigram, but earnest, truthful, and full of a biting simplicity. The style, the measure, the very boldness of the verses, proclaimed the author; but it was to a woman that Quevedo owed his betrayal. A certain lady of the court, a Donna Margarita —"*una astuta mujer y de las famosas de la corte*"— informed Olivarez of the secret, and one cold winter's night in 1639, the Alguazils of the court seized Quevedo, deprived him of his papers, and for a second time in his life he found himself a prisoner. In the years 1620-21-22 he had, indeed, been confined to his estates, but this latter imprisonment was a thousand times more tyrannical and severe. He was declared to be the author of an atrocious libel against good morals and government; was thrown into the dungeon of a convent, where a stream of water passed under his bed, producing a pernicious dampness and malaria. His estates were confiscated, and, during his imprisonment, he was reduced to subsist by common charity.

This was not all. Quevedo was old, nearly sixty years of age. The dampness and harsh treatment had the worst possible effect upon him. He fell dangerously ill; but his enemies, wishing nothing so much as his death, denied him the "luxury" of a physician. His teeth rotted in his head; his whole frame was full of aches and agues; his flesh broke out into great sores: the imprisoned satirist cauterised these himself.

When they whom he has offended get the better of a clever man, there is little or no question as to their treatment of him. He must expiate, before their dulness, the crime of his superior knowledge. He must work out his certain punishment. There is nothing so cruel as unmitigated stupidity when offended. It is not pleasant to dwell upon these things; we must therefore leave Quevedo to his fate, and, whilst pitying the man, admire the constancy of the poet. True, poetic genius finds sermons in the stones and consolation in the walls of a jail. If, on account of its sensitive nature, it experiences more sorrow and trouble, and feels acutely trials which leave the callous man of the world scatheless, it also finds a precious jewel in adversity, and an ointment more healing than the balm of Gilead in the contemplation of its trials. The fable of the ancients has pourtrayed this very beautifully, and the laws of nature show us a poetic analogy. You may strike upon the stubborn oak, and the blow will produce no effect; nay, if you cut into its heart the wound only remains dry and ghastly; but if you wound the poplar, the nature of the tree is such that it will weep and distil its innermost

juices, and by its own tears at once heal the wound and form a beautiful and precious gum. So it is with the satirist and humorous poet. Quevedo bemoans indeed his own hard fate, and Thomas Hood, whose manner sometimes reminds one of the Spaniard, comments upon his hard fortune, but both do it in such a merry brave style that their verses have become a consolation for thousands of others. In the 16th "Romance" of the book Thalia we find Quevedo exhibiting this manliness and courage very remarkably, and so finely that we shall do a benefit to the reader by quoting them:—

. . . My planet has looked on
With such a dark and scowling eye
My fortune, if my ark were gone,
Might lend my pen as black a dye.

No lucky or unlucky turn
Did ever fortune seem to play,
But, ere I'd time to laugh or mourn,
'Twas sure to turn another way.

Ye childless great who want an heir,
Leave all your vast domains to me,
And Heaven will bless you with a fair,
Alas, and numerous progeny.

They bear my effigy about
The village as a charm of power,
If clothed, to bring the sunshine out,
If naked, to bring down the shower.

Should bravos chance to lie perdu
To break some happy lover's head,
I am their man, whilst he in view
His beauty serenades in bed.

A loosened tile is sure to fall
In contact with my head below
Just as I doff my hat. 'Mong all
The crowd a stone still lays me low.

My doctor's remedies alone
Ne'er reach the cause for which they're given,
And if I ask my friends a loan,
They wish the poet's soul in Heaven!

The poor man's eye amidst the crowd
Still turns its asking looks on mine;
Jostled by all the rich and proud,
No path is clear whate'er my line.

Where'er I go I miss my way.
I lose, still lose, at every game;
No friend I ever had would stay,
No foe but still remained the same.

I get no water out at sea,
Nothing but water at my inn;
My pleasures, like my wine, must be
Still mixed with that should NOT *be in.*

This is the last specimen we shall give of Quevedo's numerous poems; it is scarcely, indeed, as a poet that he is remembered: his sonnets are, as we have seen, some of them very noble, and are evidently the production of a noble soul. That of Quevedo had need to have been noble and constant too. He had smitten vice in high places; his satire and the revelations of court life which he had given were not forgotten. He expiated that worst of crimes in a fallen age, the crime of wishing to make his country better, by an imprisonment of four years,

every day of which was a martyrdom. He underwent this punishment with a never-failing bravery and constancy; he turned calmly to that consolation which is found above; he wrote religious works, the "Life of the Apostle Paul," and an "Introduction to a Religious Life;" so, let us hope that both he, as well as others, could say that—

> . . . The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
> Leads to the world where sorrow is unknown.

One of his religious treatises is curious. There is a treatise upon good and bad fortune by Seneca, 'De Remediis utriusque Fortunæ,' which abounds in consolatory and philosophic views of life, views so pure and elevated, that it is with difficulty that one can believe them the work of any but a Christian. Quevedo translated this, and added an additional chapter to each, wherein it is easy to see that he is speaking to, and consoling himself rather than the reader in his misfortunes. These works are evidently the work of an earnest Christian; yet we shall find that, earnest as he was, he hated priestcraft with a royal hate.

At last the King of Spain died, and Olivarez, his rapacious minister, fell from power. The few friends of Quevedo pressed for an examination: it was granted, and the imprisonment was declared to be a mistake. The real author of the verses, which were attributed to Quevedo, was found to be a monk! That is the way the Government accounted for their spite and injustice: the poor poet, broken in health but not in spirit, was set free.

Madrid was thenceforth hateful to him; and, for peace and quietude for religious consolation and reflection, during the last few weeks of his life, Quevedo dragged himself to his little estate in the Sierra Morena, where his solitary dwelling, the tower of St. John the Abbot (*Torre de Juan Abad*), stood, grim, weather-worn, and half-ruined. The old walls were of red stone, the construction itself Moorish, the windows broken and dilapidated, the court-yards overgrown with aloes, the walls of the little castle clothed with shrubs and verdure. His poetry, the source of all his woe and all his joys, did not forsake him in this last retreat. He drew between himself and his old tower a touching and evident comparison. He wandered, when he could find strength, about its ancient walks; he himself was but a ruin. He had been worsted in the struggle with his enemies, he was weak and paralysed, he had lost his left eye through the miasma of his prison, and he was nearly blinded.

Dark ruined tower, my sad and last retreat,
Where daily I mine own wrecked shadow greet;
Around me silence, in my heart the grave,
No longer through my heart old passions rave;
Desire, love, regret, ambition cease
Their constant babblings now. O leave but peace.
Peace lights my soul and makes my heart serene,
When thinking what I've felt and what I've seen.
A poet once, I rivalled the gay birds;
But, oh! I've shed more tears than uttered words!

These are said to be his last verses. He died a few days after writing them in his lonely tower of the Sierra

Morena, on the 8th of September, 1645. "Après tout," cries his French biographer, "cette vie est complète; on serait fâché quelle se fût écoulée autrement."

Complete, indeed, but complete as the lives of too many men of genius have been. Complete in suffering, in sorrow, in joy, in tears, in smiles. They run through the whole circle of thought, they experience the whole world of feeling, before they are permitted to purify themselves by trial, and to come, humbly, penitently, and quietly, to the throne of that great power, who has told us long, long ago, how futile and empty this world is, and has bidden us, too often without effect, to wean ourselves from it.

The translation which we have in English of a few of the visions of Quevedo is the only acquaintance, we believe, that the unlettered Englishman has with him, and that is scanty and incorrect. An incident in one of these visions is noticed by Cowper in the following lines:—

> Quevedo, as he tells his sober tale,
> Asked, when in hell, to see the royal jail;
> Approved the method in all other things,
> "But where, good sir, do you confine your kings?"
> "There," said the guide, "the group is full in view."
> "Indeed," replied the sage, "there are but few."
> The sooty janitor the charge disdained.
> "*Few, fellow! There are all that ever reigned.*"

Sir Roger L'Estrange, a man of very quick and vivid genius himself, and the first of that now illustrious body, "the gentlemen of the press," making literature his pro-

fession, was too anxious to get money from the booksellers to be very careful about his translation. Nevertheless, there is a free, nervous feeling, and perfect appreciation about his rendering which makes it capital reading. In the year 1715 it had passed through eleven editions, and was a popular work; but, in reading it, you would scarcely know it to be a translation, for Sir Roger hath not only turned the words, but where he can, the ideas and places; thus the Prado at Madrid becomes Pall Mall, the Spanish place of execution Tyburn, &c, but it loses none of the smartness of Quevedo. The manner in which the visions take place is much the same as in other works of the same nature. The author happens to see some priests dispossess a man held by the devil: he holds converse with the devil, and afterwards falls asleep and dreams that he is in the infernal regions. Of course therein he meets all sorts of persons: ladies of quality, kings, doctors, poets, fiddlers, tailors, judges, lawyers, scriveners, tradespeople, and pastrycooks. Curiously enough, he is very hard upon these poor pastrycooks, and he sends them quietly to their punishment in company "with a cook that was troubled in conscience for putting off *cats* for hares." The book is, in fact, a very humorous satire or invective against all trades and professions. No one escapes. Like Jacques, in "As You Like It," Quevedo cries:—

> Give me leave
> To speak my mind, and I will through and through
> Cleanse the foul body of the infected world—
> If they will patiently receive my medicine.

Hallam has remarked that, although Quevedo was a various writer, he is now only remembered by his prose. "His visions and his life of the great Tacaño were early translated, and they are better than anything in comic romance, except 'Don Quixote,' that has been produced in the 15th century. And yet this commendation is not a high one. In the picturesque style the life of the great Tacaño is tolerably amusing, but Quevedo, like others, has long been surpassed. The Suenos, or visions, are better, they show spirit and sharpness, with some originality of invention." This is but faint praise. Bouterwek speaks more highly. "Lucian," says he, "furnished him with the original idea of satirical visions; but Quevedo's were the first of their kind in modern literature. Owing to frequent imitations their faults are no longer disguised with the charm of novelty, and even their merits have ceased to interest."

The translation of the "Suenos" was undertaken in England by a "person of quality;" under which title we always are led to suspect that some nameless bookseller's hack is at work. In this instance, however, the title is a true one. The person was one of certain quality, being no less than Sir Roger L'Estrange, who, as Hallam says, takes great liberties with his text, and "endeavours to excel it in art by means of frequent interpolation." Without pausing to note the curious use of the word "excel" by Hallam, we may as well say that the words "made English," applied to Sir Roger's translation, really mean all that they can be supposed to mean. One is no longer in Madrid,

but in London; we hear of Gray's Inn and its pump, of the Temple, of the Exchange, Hide-Park, as he spells it, and Spring Gardens. This method adds vivacity and freshness to a somewhat sombre work, and it may be defended; certainly the English reader gets thereby a more lively idea of the true spirit and scope of the "Visions." Of course as an actual translation this English work, which has been so often reprinted, must be regarded as a failure. "All the translations that I have seen are bad," writes Mr. Ticknor, "the best is that of L'Estrange, or at least the most spirited; but still L'Estrange is not always faithful when he knew the meaning, and he is sometimes unfaithful from ignorance. Indeed the great popularity of his translations was probably owing in some degree to the additions he boldly made to his text, and the frequent accommodations he hazarded of its jests to the scandal and tastes of his times by allusions entirely local and English." This is no doubt true, and Mr. Ticknor has been very lenient to L'Estrange for the vast liberties which he has taken with his author; but he might have said more in praise of the masculine and nervous style. Sir Roger's English is very natural and colloquial, and better than many far deeper scholars could have written. Hence the translation reads pleasantly, and soon became popular. Here are specimens of it. The first extract is from the beginning of the book, "the Alguazil, or Catchpole, possest:"—

"Going t'other Day to hear Mass at a Convent in this Town, the Door it seems was shut, and a World of People

pressing and begging to get in. Upon Enquiry *What the Matter was;* they told me of a *Demoniac* to be *exorcised;* (or *dispossest*) which made me put in for one, to see the Ceremony, though to little Purpose; for when I had half smothered myself in the Throng, I was e'en glad to get out again, and bethink myself of my Lodging. Upon my way homeward, at the Street's-end, it was my fortune to meet a familiar Friend of mine of the same Convent, who told me as before. Taking notice of my Curiosity, he bad me follow him; which I did, 'till with his *Passe-par-tout,* he brought me through a little back-door into the Church, and so into the Vestry: Where we saw a wretched kind of a dog-look'd Fellow, with a Tippet about his Neck, as ill-ordered as you'd wish; his Cloaths all in tatters, his Hands bound behind him, roaring and tearing after a most hideous manner. Bless me, quoth I, (crossing my self) what have we here? This (says the good Father who was to do the Feat) is a Man that's possest with an *Evil Spirit. That's a Lye,* (with respect of the Company, cryed the Devil that tormented him) for this is not a *Man* possest with a *Devil,* but a *Devil* possest with a *Man;* and therefore you should do well to have a care what you say; for it is most evident, both by the Question and Answer, that you are but a Company of Sots. You must understand, that we *Devils,* never enter into the Body of a *Catchpole,* but by force, and in spight of our Hearts; and therefore to speak properly, you are to say, this is a *Devil catchpol'd,* and not a *Catchpole bedevil'd.* And, to give you your Due, *you* Men can deal

better with *us Devils*, than with the *Catchpoles;* for *We flye from the Cross;* whereas *They make use of it*, for a Cloak for their Villany.

"But though we *differ* thus in our *Humours*, we hold a very fair *Correspondence* in our *Offices;* If *we* draw Men into *Judgment* and *Condemnation*, so do the *Catchpoles; we* pray for an increase of *Wickedness* in the World, so do *they;* nay and more zealously than *we;* for they make a *Livelihood* of it, and we do it only for *Company*. And in this the *Catchpoles* are worse than the *Devils;* they prey upon their own Kind, and worry one another. For *our* parts, we are *Angels* still, though *black ones*, and were turn'd into *Devils* only for aspiring into an equality with our Maker: Whereas *the very Corruption of Mankind is the Generation of a Catchpole*. So that, my good Father, your labour is but lost in plying this Wretch with *Reliques;* for you may as soon redeem a Soul from Hell, as a Prey out of his Clutches. In fine, your *Algouazils* (or *Catchpoles*) and your *Devils* are both of an Order, only your *Catchpole-Devils* wear *Shoes and Stockings*, and we go *barefoot*, after the Fashion of this reverend Father; and (to deal plainly) have a very hard time on't.

"I was not a little surpriz'd to find the *Devil* so great a Sophister; but all this notwithstanding, the Holy Man went on with his *Exorcism*, and to stop the Spirit's Mouth, washt his Face with a little *Holy-Water;* which made the *Demoniac ten times madder* than before, and set him a yelping so horridly, that it deafened the Company, and made the very Ground under us to tremble. And now,

says he, you may, perchance, imagine this Extravagance to be the Effect of your *Holy-Water;* but let me tell you, that meer *Water* it self would have done the same Thing; for your *Catchpole* hates nothing in this World like *Water;* [especially that of a *Gray's-Inn Pump.*]"

Next follows a humorous discourse ridiculing the silly, useless, and profane way in which the name of the devil was and is used by many people wherewith to interlard their discourse. One perusal of the following should prevent any sensible man from repeating the offence:—

"You must give over that Roguish way ye have got of abusing the *Devils* in your Shews, Pictures and Emblems: One while forsooth we are painted with *Claws* or *Talons,* like *Eagles* or *Griffons.* Another while we are drest up with *Tails;* and now and then ye shall see a Devil with a *Coxcomb.* Now I will not deny but some of us may indeed be very well taken for *Hermits* and *Philosophers.* If you can help us in this Point, do; and we shall be ready to do ye *one good Turn for another.* I was asking *Michael Angelo* here a while ago, why he drew the Devils in his great Piece of the *Last Judgment,* with so many *Monkey Faces,* and *Jack-Pudding Postures.* His Answer was, that he followed his Fancy, without any Malice in the World, for as then, he had never seen any Devils; nor (indeed) did he believe that there were any; but he has now learned the contrary to his cost. There's another thing too we take extreamly ill, which is, that in your ordinary Discourses, ye are out with your Purse presently to every Rascal, and calling of him *Devil.* As for Ex-

ample. Do you see how this *Devil* of a *Taylor* has spoil'd my Sute? How the *Devil* has made me Wait? How that *Devil* has couzen'd me, *&c.* Which is very ill done, and no small disparagement to our Quality, to be rank'd with *Taylors:* a Company of Slaves, that serve us only for Brushwood; and they are fain to beg hard to be admitted at all: Though I confess they have *Possession* on their sides, and *Custom*, which is *another Law:* Being in Possession of Theft, and *stollen Goods;* they make much more Conscience of keeping your *Stuffs* than your *Holydays*, grumbling and domineering at every turn, if they have not the same respect with the Children of the Family. Ye have another trick too, of giving every thing to the Devil, that displeases ye; which we cannot but take very unkindly. *The Devil take thee*, says one: a goodly Present I warrant ye; but the *Devil* has somewhat else to do, than to take and carry away all that's given him; if they'll come of themselves, let them come and welcome. Another gives that Whelp of a *Lacquey* to the *Devil;* but the *Devil* will have none of your *Lacqueys*, he thanks you for your Love; a pack of Rogues that are commonly worse than Devils; and to say the truth, they are good neither Rost nor Sodden. I give that *Italian* to the *Devil*, cryes a third; thank you for nothing; For ye shall have an *Italian* will chouse the *Devil* himself, and take him by the Nose like Mustard. Some again will be giving a *Spaniard* to the *Devil;* but he has been so cruel wherever he has got footing, that we had rather have his room than his company."

The vision "El Sueño de las Calaveras," which represents the Last Judgment, has a certain kind of sublime grotesqueness about it which, alas, Sir Roger turns only into wilder and more awkward fun. It will not be policy, therefore, to follow his translation in the following extract:—

"I saw in my vision a very handsome youth towering in the air, and sounding a trumpet; the severity of his face did however detract from his beauty. The very monuments and graves all obeyed this dreadful call. Scarcely had the trumpet sounded, when I perceived that those who had been soldiers and captains rising in great haste, for they thought they heard the signal for battle; behold, too, the avaricious wretches woke in fear of being robbed; and the epicures and idle received it as a call to dinner or the chase.* This was easily seen by the expression of their countenances, and I perceived that the real object of the sound of the trumpet was not understood by any one. I afterwards saw souls flying from their former bodies, some in disgust, some in affright. To one body an arm was wanting, to another an eye. I could not forbear smiling at the diversity of the figures, and admiring that Providence which, amidst such a confusion of limbs, prevented any one from taking the arms or the legs of his neighbour. I observed only one burial ground

* L'Estrange did not forget his Tory instincts. He translates this last clause, "the *cavaliers and good fellows* believed they had been going to a horse race or a hunting match."

where the dead seemed to be changing their heads; and I saw a notary (L'Estrange calls this fellow *a low atturneye*) whose soul was not in a satisfactory state and who, by way of excuse, pretended that it had been changed and was not his own. But what astonished me most was to see the bodies of two or three tradesmen, who had so entangled their souls, that they had got their five senses at the end of their five fingers. When at last the whole congregation came to understand that this was the Day of Judgment, what a shifting and shuffling there was amongst the wicked."

This vision, "El Sueño de las Calaveras," which L'Estrange makes the third, is in the "Obras Jocosas" the first; it is dedicated to Count de Lemos, President of the Indies, to whom Cervantes had dedicated the second part of his Quijote, his Comedies, and other works. The few lines which follow will afford some specimen of the original:—"Y pasando tiempo (aunque fué breve), vi à los que habian sido soldados y capitanes levantarse de los sepulcros con ira, juzándola por seña de guerra: à los avarientos con ansias y congojas, recelando algun rebato: y los dados à vanidad y gula, con ser áspero el son, lo tuverion por cosa de sarao ò caza. Esto conocia yo eu los semblantes de cada uno, y no vi que llegase el ruido de la trompeta à oreja, que se persuadiese à lo que era."

In a smoother version and more faithful translation the real thought of the author and his deep manner of dealing with his subject is seen:—"Nevertheless, when all fairly comprehended, for there had before been doubt that

this was the Day of Judgment, it was worth beholding how the voluptuous and lascivious tried to hinder their eyes from being found for them, so that they might not import into the cause witnesses against themselves, how the malicious avoided their own tongues, and how murderers and robbers seemed willing to run off their feet in getting out of the way of their own hands. And turning my head I saw a miser, who, having been embalmed, and his entrails left afar off, was quietly waiting till his bowels should arrive, whether, since the dead were to that day arise, certain money-bags of his were to rise also? I had great inclination to laugh at this, but, on the other side of me I had to pity the extreme eagerness with which a great crowd of notaries and lawyers was rushing by, flying from their own ears, in order to escape hearing their own sentence; but none succeeded in this, except those who in this present world had had their ears cropped off as thieves; but these, *owing to the neglect of justice*, were by no means in the majority."

Here is satire that hits hard; indeed the six undoubted Sueños of Quevedo are full, as Ticknor has said, of the most truculent sarcasm, "recklessly cast about by one to whom the world had not been a friend, nor the world's law." All that Quevedo has written indicates, but his Visions most especially, a bold, honest, earnest, and somewhat careless spirit. Those who know the world will not blame him even now; he hated the falsity, the cruelty, the cowardice of society, and he spoke against it; the difficulty for such a man in such an age would be *not* to write a satire.

We have seen that the Spanish world was not inclined to follow Quevedo's teachings. The corruption was too great for it to listen to him; and for more than two centuries after his death the fate which he foretold, the decay which he would have prevented, the wretched weakness and intestine quarrel, has come upon it. Let us, too, take heed lest place-hunting and corruption do not send the glory of England to whistle down the winds as they have done that of Spain, and let us welcome all such manly, wholesome satirists as Quevedo, taking their chastisements in good part, mending ourselves by their directions, not crying out upon their peevishness and ill-nature, being assured that they fulfil an important mission, and that the majority of them can say of their writings, as Quevedo did of his,—"He who rightly comprehends the morality of this discourse shall never repent the reading of it."

MADAME J. M. B. DE LA MOTHE GUION

AND QUIETISM.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

L'Ame amante de son Dieu representée dans les emblèmes de Hermanus Hugo sur ses pieux désirs, et dans ceux d'Othon Vœnius sur l'Amour divin, avec des figures accompagnées de Vers. Cologne, 1716.

Moyen Court et très-facile pour faire l'oraison. Lyon, 1688 et 1690.

Recueil de Poésies Spirituelles. Amsterdam, 1689, 5 vols. in 8vo.

Opuscules Spirituels, contenant le *Moyen cour de faire l'oraison, les Torrents Spirituels, etc.* Cologne, 1704, in 12mo.

Vie de Mme Guyon, écrite par elle-même (probably a composition by Poiret from material furnished from the Archbishopric of Paris). Cologne, 1720, 3 vol. 12mo.

The Life of Lady Guion, written by herself, in French, *now abridged and translated into English, &c. &c.* Bristol, S. Farley, MDCCLXXII.

A short and easy Method of Prayer. Translated from the French of Madame J. M. B. de la Mothe Guion. By Thomas Digby Brooke. London, MDCCLXXV.

The Devout Christian, or the soul filled with the fullness of God. Being extracts from the works of Lady Guion, *who for her pious writings suffered a series of cruel persecutions by the Romish Church in France in the 17th century.* Brighton, 1847 (?). By Clericus (?).

Life and Experience of Madame Guion. By T. C. Upham. Sampson Low and Son, 1862.

MADAME J. M. B. DE LA MOTHE GUION AND QUIETISM.

A. D. 1648—1717.

"LA Politique tirée de la Sainte Ecriture." A National Policy founded upon Scripture! What a cry is here for a politico-religious party! What an admirable solution for all external and internal differences; that is to say, if men would first do two things, i. e. agree as to the kind of policy mapped out by Scripture, and then be of one mind in accepting it!

But, alas, although many admirable people have been ready for this beatified state, so far from realizing it are we that over all the world we seem to see, at the present time, little else but the triumph of Force. This is, at best, unpleasant to those ardent and hopeful souls who look forward to a reign of peace, gentleness, and love.

Austria and Prussia, having gone against the whole sense of Europe, have killed, and have taken possession, divided the spoils, and now fight for them. Poland is held

down, and lies quiet enough, almost as if she were dead. They who died in a great cause seem to have failed, and died in vain. In America the Union is restored and kept together by force, and the South is content to accept the result. The struggle over, the wise and good hail the abolition of slavery as worth its cost, and moderation in the hour of victory will cement the tie which binds the South to the North. In Italy the popular cause has triumphed, but the Papacy still keeps its ground, and Austria holds Venetia; and the only consolation which the lover of progress has may be summed up in that saving advice which the pupil of Gamaliel gave to the restless Christians of Thessalonica, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business."

In the political world—that great world, whose newspaper is history, and whose years are cycles, or at least lustrums—there is an ebb and flow in the tide of events. They flow rapidly enough at first, and then they cease, and rest. We have been going ahead pretty quickly, and the motion has made us somewhat giddy. The thousand years of peace which the saints are to enjoy before the other dead arise, seemed to some ardent souls to have commenced about fourteen years ago—in 1851, when the brotherhood of nations and the federation of the world had set in. The war-drum was to throb no longer; there were some millions of swords ready to be beaten up into ploughshares, and as many guns to be made into steam-engines or cylindrical boilers. We saw nothing to fight with but Nature: waste lands were to be subdued, and deserts tamed.

But, 1852 taught man that, when he thought he had tamed his heart, he counted without his host. There is much to be done yet before we reach Dr. Cumming's millennial rest. Russia, France, America, Prussia, and Austria, and, lastly, we may add, England, the last being certainly the most peaceable, are full of unquiet spirits, who are too ready to appeal to force, and who, when people talk of peace, make them ready for war.

If you are on the right side of duty, perhaps it is as well to be shot out of life as to be cheated out of it. Perhaps in the sight of God a fœtid court in London or Liverpool, where vice always shoulders Poverty, and Death hob-a-nobs cheek by jowl with the two, is as sore an evil as is a battle-field, where a number of men, blinded by prejudice, and enlisted upon two opposite sides of a principle, blow each other to bits, and deface God's image by the thousand. War is not an unmitigated evil, although it is no doubt a very sore one. But life itself is a war; and the most eloquent of the Apostles has taken up the whole armour, and told us indeed to be Soldiers having the shield of Faith, the breastplate of Righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit.

Quietism, therefore, hardly holds a place with the earnestly active good man; but there are many good men who are not very active. These are the men who seek to go out of the world; who, with Cowper, sigh for—

> —— A lodge in some vast wilderness,
> Some boundless contiguity of shade,
> Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
> Of unsuccessful or successful war,
> Might never reach me more.

And, with Goldsmith's saddened and defeated ideal of himself, are always ready to

> Quit the world where strong temptations try,
> And, since 'tis hard to combat, learn to fly.

But it may be doubted whether any one of such men ever flew far enough; you change the country, but not the mind. You may philosophise with silent Indians, eat with swinish Hottentots, mate with the lower natures anywhere, but you will not find peace. You may believe that when you are teaching a train of village children you will be away from deceit, and in the very atmosphere of innocence; you may bask in a fancied quietness, and all the time the snake is crawling under the grass, and the viper gliding among the flowers.

People with shaken nerves shiver at a noise; but it is doubtful whether the publication of their quiet doctrines and the ventilation of their wishes do not excite the devil Obstinacy and Opposition to make more "row" than ever. It was said, with some truth, by the most vivid and brilliant of our modern historians, that the deputation of the three Quakers to Russia, and the speeches of those eminently quarrelsome men, Messrs. C—— and B——, did more to plunge us into the disastrous and foolish Russian war than anything else. As for Mr. B——, we know how he looked upon war in America, and the whole of his life has been one state of war. We all admire his eloquent tongue, but we know very well that it has blown up as many fierce tongue battles and contests as any battle trumpet in the world. Mr. B—— is therefore no quietist,

and probably confesses to himself that little fact at least. Nor is Quietism consistent with a political life. To be up and doing, to trust in one's own labour, not to lie down and wait for what will turn up; to be up early and at plough while others sleep; to look ahead and get before others in the race; to fight fairly but earnestly, and to take our own part in everything; these are the ways of the anti-quietist and generally bustling and successful man.

Certainly quietism does not fare well in the world: activity and continual labour are much better; and perhaps the blessing of God follows these last as well as the first. For, if logically carried out, it seems that the good would not find their ways very pleasant, but would be surrounded by the wicked, like gaping bulls and wolves, to which King David, drawing his images from his shepherd's life, likens them. Is quietism the right thing then in religion? Ought we always to suffer all we can, to submit to all we can, and not to resist wickedness?

This perhaps is the most important part of the question. God is so great, and the world is to many, if not all, so full of mystery, of trial, trouble, and perturbation, that they would try to leave it as much as they can, and creep into some lonely corner to die. But surely such a feeling is morbid and wrong. Although we see it exhibited in many excellent men, yet it is in those men who are so physically weak that their weakness amounts to disease. "I was a wounded stag who left the herd," says Cowper, plaintively; but then this "wounded stag" was so bash-

ful, and of so retiring a nature, that he dared not read aloud the minutes of the House of Commons, which his duty as clerk therein required him to do. And when we retire from the world, not, as many dull people say, from God's world, the material earth, which is beautiful, but from man's world, which is base, do we not soon begin to despise and hate man? "God made the country, and man made the town," wrote the same poet. God is grand, man is vile, say other quietists, always placing God in opposition to Man, His chief work. But all this is false. Unless we love man, whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? Man made the country out of the materials which God gave him. The smiling fields of harvest, the decent hedge-rows, the pretty gardens, the wheat in the ear, the bearded barley, the green rank-leaved turnip, the waving grass, the vetch and sainfoin; the sturdy oak, the clinging vine, and the bridegroom elm, around which it clings, are planted and raised into beauty by man. Nay, the country—a vast, wild desert, but for man—derives its chief beauty from the contrasting crowded cities. Strong natures love cities and crowds and the bustle of life; weak natures shun them. Milton, who is, to say the least, as truly religious a poet as Cowper, presents a fine contrast to his weakness, when he declares that, far from fleeing to the country—

> Tower'd cities please us then,
> And the busy hum of men,
> Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
> In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,
> With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
> Rain influence, and judge the prize.

And yet, with melancholy, soft natures, there will always be a determined love for quietism. Perhaps civilization will increase this, just as among the high-bred and mild Hindoos, contemplative, not active, religion is the aim and end of life. Is not a man who does nothing free from blame? Can we do better than present ourselves spotless to God? How shall we do better than think of Him and His works for ever? Such may be their questions, and to them we often return, for they involve the whole spirit of Quietism—they will solve all our doubts whether war is lawful; whether England may resist the bullyings of a triumphant and a braggart rival or enemy; whether a Christian man may carry arms; and whether one who would lead the gentle life might dare to shoot a burglar, or call in a policeman to a pickpocket.

These queries, and others which will arise out of this portion of the subject, may be answered by the life of the great modern saint of Quietism, Madame Guion, a woman of very noble family, and a contemplative religious poetess, whose hymns many of our people now sing; for very beautiful they are, and beautifully have they been translated by William Cowper.

The name Quietism was given to the doctrines which this lady enunciated, and upon which she insisted, because the chief point of religion, she asserted, was to be quiet. She carried this out considerably further than many people would think. The chief duty of man, says a writer, "was, according to Madame Guion, to be wrapped up in the continual contemplation and love of God, so as to

become totally independent of outward circumstances and of the influence of the senses; and Quietists contended that when a man had arrived at this state of perfection, the soul had no further occasion for prayer and other external devotional practices. Quietism is, in fact, the extreme of asceticism mixed with contemplative devotion." As such very many souls have felt an impulse to it. When Coleridge had enlisted as "John Comberbatch" in a dragoon regiment, and made no doubt an awkward sort of fellow in the awkward squad, his religious thoughts took much such a turn as this. "From the All-seeing and All-knowing God," he said, "aught to desire were impotence of mind;" that is, in Coleridge's then idea, all we had to do was to sit down and wait. The expression of desire, or prayer, was perfectly nonsensical, if desire itself were impotence of mind. With the Mohammedans and the Brahmins such men not only exist, but take their place, a chief place, in religion. The Turk has his Kismet, and lets the cholera march over him: so too many of our village Methodists were violent against dear, simple, observing Dr. Jenner, and condemned him as a wicked man because he prevented the small-pox, and, as they said, interfered with what they believed was the will of God.

The Church of Rome has on her garment (which, as she boasts, is without a rent or seam) a good many patches of the queerest colours. Every member believes the same thing; but not having the liberty of Christ, and being still under the law, everybody adds something to the belief of his neighbour. This did Michael Molinos, a Spanish

monk, in the seventeenth century, who, in addition to being a good Catholic, embodied quietism in his works, and for it got condemned at Rome, nay, and put into prison, where he died (1696), having for many years been furnished by his Church with a contemplative retreat.

But what the monk had let fall Madame Guion took up, and with her, many ladies of rank, many pious people, let us hope, in a corrupt court. Among them was Madame de Maintenon, and good Abbé de Fénélon. Madame Guion, who was a young widow with three children, must have been able to work great things on others by sympathy, for all near her fell into her crotchets. Her director, the Father Lacombe, shared her ideas. He wrote a work, *The Analysis of Mental Devotion*, in which the strongest quietist views were put forward. Kneeling was no use in his views; confession, prayer, were to be done away with. Madame Guion, Quietist as she was, endeavoured to introduce her system into various convents; but the bishops very properly told her to leave off meddling with their flocks. What! disuse kneeling, bowing, crossing oneself, prostration, fasting, and all forms? Monks and priests were alarmed, and contended, rightly enough, that "it was impossible to keep up the external warmth of piety without prayer;" and that "a perpetual state of contemplation was impossible."

On the other hand, Madame Guion had insisted, and with truth, that, without internal prayer, all praying with the lips was useless. She published a book, "*Moyen court et très facile de faire Oraison*" (A Short and Easy

Method of Praying); and this book very nearly revolutionized religious society, and brought about a serious conflict between two great lights of the Gallican church, Bossuet and Fénélon.

Madame Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Mothe Guion was born at Montargis, 13th April, 1648, and died on the 9th June, 1717. Her father, a *maître des requêtes*, was of a family for many years noted for its severe religion; and his little girl, who became so celebrated, seems at a very early age to have shown that she inherited the family proclivity to austere devotion. "My parents," she says, "made a very high profession of piety, especially my father, for in his family they reckoned almost as many saints as persons who composed it."

Like that of Montaigne, who was, if we are to credit him, an eleven months' child, there was something very peculiar about Madame Guion's birth. "I was born before due time; for my mother, having received a terrible fright, was delivered of me on the eighth month; at which time they say 'tis almost impossible for a baby to live." She herself nearly proved the truth of the saying; her father ran for a priest, and when he came back found the poor baby without a sign of life, "with only an expiring sigh." So the priest and the father returned in the greatest distress, and the little future saint very nearly died without being baptized. "Had I died then, O my God!" she writes with an ecstatic piety, "I had never known thee. These alternatives of death and life were sign-omens of what was afterwards to befall me; one while dying by sin,

another while living by grace. Death and life had a combat, but life was victorious. Oh, might I hope that in the conclusion life will be victorious over death! Doubtless it will be so, if thou live alone in me, oh my God, who art at present my only life and my only love!"

The translator of the English "Life of Lady Guion," who has addressed his work to "Britons and Protestants," is very much alarmed because he imagines they will cry out against him, "What! the life of a Papist, and a Popish woman too; away with it." But the fact is poor Madame Guion has very little of the Scarlet Woman in her. Her piety is so true, so fresh, fervent and beautiful; or, to worldly people, so weak, silly, and overpowering, that we can well understand why the Protestant Cowper translated her hymns, and why Wesley and Whitefield upheld her works and her life of singular purity and austere devotion. I am not saying that this life was the model life, the best possible life, or anything like it, but I do say that it has in it something very courageous, singularly touching, and beautifully devotional, and that in its determination to give up every moment, every thought, every feeling to the Supreme Being, it is much more easily sneered at than imitated. Moreover, had Madame Guion been born in a Protestant country, or in the Anglican Church, her piety would have borne more useful fruit, although her devotion could not have been more sincere.

The effect of some centuries of Romish piety in the little girl was curious. Weak enough in body she was indeed. Yet hardly fully alive, an imposthume, she says,

was discovered in the lower part of her back, and this was cut out, leaving a wound of "prodigious size, so that the surgeon could put the whole of his hand in it." Poor baby; "out of such frightful corruption," she writes, "it pleased thee to raise me, oh my Saviour." Freed from this strange malady, "I was seized with a gangrene first on one thigh and then on the other. Truly my life seemed hardly anything else but a series of maladies." When a mere child she had a terrible vision of hell, which frightened her so much that she would go to confess; but she was so small that the mistress of the boarders—she was in an Ursuline convent—went with her, and then the poor child accused herself of *having thoughts contrary to the Faith!* The good confessor, smiling, asked her what they were, and the little baby, she was about four years old then, told him that "I had doubted of hell, but since then I had seen it, and I now doubted of it no longer."

A very pretty picture this calls up to us, illustrative too of every-day life in the Church of Rome. We can fancy the thin, pale, weird face of the child saint, worn with bodily and mental illness, the bending sister of the Ursulines expressing wonder at the child, and conveying at the same time much respect to the father confessor; and, too, the quiet smile of the good father, a gentleman perhaps touched with the Laodicean tendencies of the age, and who wondered as he looked down at the girl at the curious effect of early piety and asceticism. Another picture of an occurrence which took place a little before this might also be made. It is of the visit of Henry IV. to the nuns of

Port Royal, when Mother Angelique, aged about seven years and wearing shoes six inches thick to make her look a little taller, toddled out to meet his jovial majesty, with her crozier and all the insignia of her rank. No wonder that the king kissed his hand to the little abbess, and declared that in his prayers he would remember Mother Angelique.

At four years of age, then, she had been introduced to the Benedictines by the Duchess of Montbazon, a relative of her father's, who was pleased to see her in the habit of "a little nun," and where the little nun loved to sing the praises of God. One loves to linger over these early scenes; soon after the vision and confession the child desired martyrdom, and the young nonettes were not unwilling (in fun) to indulge her. "The girls set me on my knees, on a cloth that was spread, and lifted up a great cutlass behind me. But I suddenly cried out that I was not at liberty to die without my father's consent. They said then that I should be no martyr, and that I had only made that excuse to free myself from it. *And indeed it was true!* However, I was afterwards much afflicted. My consolation left me, and something reproached me that I wanted courage to go immediately to heaven." But saint as she was at that age, and saint as her father was, the world appears to have entered that convent. She does not remember that she did anything amiss "except saying a number of petty pretty little things to divert those about her,"—poor baby! But afterwards she contracted pernicious habits. "One day my father

caught me at play with some children in the street, in a way as ill suited my rank and quality! So much was he moved at the sight, as he tenderly loved me, that without saying a word to anybody he took me to the *Ursulines.*" The little thing was then nearly seven years of age.

When nearly eight years of age, she met at her father's house the Queen of England, Henrietta Maria, who, upon a hint given, had some diversion with the child, asking her many religious questions. The Queen was so pleased that she begged that she might take the child away with her as a small maid of honour; but her father resisted this request, and very luckily, as Madame thought, for her too. When a month or so older the little girl found out in the garden a small chapel dedicated to the child Jesus —this dwarfing of the Man-Christ is the cause of half, if not all the Romish follies—and betook herself thither for devotion; for some time she used to carry her breakfast there every morning, and hide it all behind his image, "for I was so much a child then," she adds, or her *auto*-biographer for her, "that I thought I made a considerable sacrifice in depriving myself of it." After this she fell into a cesspool, over which some bigger girls had been dancing, it being covered with boards. "When the girls retired I wanted to imitate them; but the boards broke under me and I fell into a frightful *goute*, yet hanging by a little bit of timber in such a manner as I was plunged in the filth without being stifled by it; a figure of the inward state I had to undergo, when in the horrible pit, which I was unable of myself to get out of."

The little bit of stick whereon, so far as one can make out, the little girl was caught and sat, was to her as a providential intervention; and lucky is it that it was so, for the boarders, in true girlish fashion, never tried to help their little sister, but ran shrieking to alarm the sisters of the house: and these nuns of course, in the manner of single women, concluded that the little nun was killed, and, instead of seeing whether the life of their poor little friend was extinct in a cesspool, ran to tell Jeanne's sister, who was then at church and at prayers. One might now naturally expect that the sister would hurry to the poor child; but she did no such thing. "She immediately prayed for me, and (after having invoked the blessed Virgin) came to me in a half dead state; but was not a little surprised when she saw me, in the mire and filth, seated as on an easy chair." Who can doubt of the earnestness of faith in people who prefer putting up a prayer to the Virgin to pulling out with an arm of flesh a poor child who is being stifled in the filth and ordure of a cesspool! But, alas! the little child herself had something that was not faith, although it was of it. Not only did she serve the poor as her Lord and Master did, but she wrote the name of Jesus on a piece of parchment, and with ribbons and a big needle fastened it to her skin in four places, and there it remained for a long time.

Constant to herself the young lady through many perturbations remained. But one must hasten on. She was little more than fifteen years of age when married to M. Jaques Guion, the son of that *entrepreneur* who made the

canal of Briace. She lets us know that she was of more noble a family than her husband, and that her family lived in greater style. Saint as she was, she was not displeased with the idea of marriage, although her father and mother, after the method of their country, made her sign the marriage articles without letting her know what they were. But she was "well pleased with the thoughts of marriage, flattering myself with the hopes of being thereby set at full liberty, and delivered from the impious and rough treatment of my mother, which I drew on myself from my want of docility." Her husband, who was thirty-eight years old, seems to have been a very good man, and to have shielded her from the tyranny of a mother-in-law and her henchwoman, who evidently looked upon too much piety as rather disagreeable. The battles between Saint Guion and the henchwoman are, when we recollect that the thorn in the sides of our wives and female-saints is now-a-days just the same, i.e. the *ancilla*, are amusing. Here are some hints of them:—

CHAPTER XVI. Her waiting-maid endeavours to prevent her going to worship!

XXIV. Great insolence of her waiting-maid.

XXVI. In the absence of her mother-in-law she turns her waiting-maid out of doors.

XXX. Her mother-in-law's great affection for her—not the maid, but Saint Guion.—After her departure she (*la belle mère*) dies of grief!

By her husband, who lived with her for twelve years, Madame Guion had five children, of whom three only

survived. When she lay in of her second daughter, afterwards Comtesse de Vaux, and then Duchesse de Sully, her husband died. In 1780, Madame Guion quitted her mother-in-law and set out for Paris, having upon her a strong fit of religious devotion, which enabled her no doubt to look with an almost worldly coolness upon the death of her mother-in-law.

It is but justice to say that, although Madame Guion often seems to complain of her want of "chastity towards God," and evidently considered after the pernicious ideas which celibacy must implant, that marriage was rather sinful than otherwise, she was a good and amiable wife. Her husband was a man of honour and very fond of her. When he heard that his mother had been cross with her he fell into a great rage, and his little wife once thought of *cutting out her own tongue* so as not to irritate him. This is her dictum; let good wives take heed of it:—

"Most men have their passions, and it is the duty of a reasonable woman to bear them peaceably without irritating them more by cross replies."

The great turning-point of woman's devotion is, however, generally afforded by one of the opposite sex, and in this case it was the Père Lacombe, an austere man, "aussi ardent dans la devotion qu'il avait été pour les plaisirs dans sa jeunesse,"* met her and became her director. To him she communicated all her reveries, how she had seen

* M. L. Louvel, *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle*, Vol. 22, Article Guyon.

the devil in a vision; how, when she rose to pray, Beelzebub, or Apollyon, or some smaller fiend, pulled away the sheets and tumbled the bed. These visions were very much like those of Luther, against whom the Romanists cry out. He, we know, at Erfurt, launched an inkstand at the head of the devil, who annoyed him a-cracking nuts.* One priest at least believed in Madame Guion, and that was her director. He listened with attention, nay, with fervour, and his disciple became his teacher, whilst he filled her with an inner strength. "Dieu," she says, "m'a fait la grace de m'*obombrer* par le Père Lacombe." She was indeed overshadowed by the grace of her confessor, but she in her turn had a distinct influence on Father Lacombe. Three generations of an extraordinary piety, a childhood spent in a mystical and, as it seems to us, too often an empirical devotion, had already produced an effect permanent and ineffaceable upon the mind of Jeanne-Marie Bouviers. She who had at the age of four years desired a small martyrdom, who had through her whole life given such proof of her ecstatic devotion, needed not to have been overshadowed by Father Lacombe to take unto herself the place of a prophetess of a new sect—a place which she had been enthusiastically sighing for all her life.

We must also look back to the early and, through her own fault, unhappy marriage of this young saint, to explain that curious bias towards worldly or fleshly sensuousness

* On this story Coleridge in his *Friend* has some excellent remarks.

which is shown in her writings. In the best models of Christian fervour, eloquence, and even rapture, in Chrysostom, Jeremy Taylor, in Massillon and Bossuet, or, to go at once to the fountain-head, in the writings of the Apostles we find no approach to these sexual similitudes, and, as many believe, almost erotic wanderings which we too often gather from the writings of Romish saints, and which Sydney Smith found and commented on in those of Protestant Methodists. Why should Madame Guion have tried the difficult task of expounding the Canticles? Why should she have lingered with distressing fondness over such passages as this:—

"Osculetur me osculo oris sui: quia meliora sunt ubera tui vino? Cant. c. i. v. i."

It is quite true that the verse may portray the mystic longing of the Spouse for his bride the Church; but it is equally true that the passage might have been written—and indeed has been written—by Hafiz, or any other of the amorous poets of Persia. We can understand why Father Tartuffe, in Molière's comedy, should, with his peculiar feelings, wish to express himself mystically; nor, to say the truth, can we Anglicans quite admire a young widow lady who could pen such prayer-raptures as the following:—

"L'Union Essentielle, et *le baiser de la bouche*, est le *mariage* spirituel, où il y a union d'essence à essence, et communication de substances où Dieu prend l'âme pour son épouse, et se l'unit, &c.

"Alors c'est le *baiser de la bouche* et la *possession* réele et parfaite. C'est une jouissance, qui n'est point stérile,

ni infructueuse; puis qu'elle ne s'entend à rien moins qu'à la communication du Verbe de Dieu à l'âme."

At another point she adds, "Toutes ses unions sont *embrassemens* divins;" and she uniformly italicises her most ardent words. But all these raptures were to be gained by silent prayer. One was not to even try to articulate a word, but to remain as quiet as a Brahmin who perpetually squints in a holy rapture at the end of his nose! No wonder that there was soon a division in the camp of the Quietists, almost as soon as the sect, if one can so call it, had been established. There was a true as well as a false method, and many, her biographers tell us, objected, "sans fondement," to pure passivity or Quietism. How Madame Guion could make her passivity agree with the raptures of the Song of Songs, one can hardly say at this time. In verse 14, which I will print in Madame Guion's own language, there are expressions which find much favour in her eyes.

"Que vous êtes belle, ma bien aimée; que vous êtes belles! vous yeux resemblent ceux des colombes."*

And a very pretty verse it is; the simile has been used for ages, and descended, in all its freshness, to Béranger and Paul Dupont. But Madame Guion reads the matter with great innocence, and says that this dove-like simplicity is the surest mark of the advancement of a soul; for using neither turnings nor artifice, it is led in the straight path by the Spirit of God."† Surely one hardly needed

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* *Le Cantique des Cantiques*, c. i. v. 14.

† Opuscules Spirituels de Mad. Guyon, p. 379.

this gloss from the pen of a lady saint. Of other verses, such as the sixth of the second chapter, "Læva ejus sub capite meo, et dextra illius amplexabitur me." She remarks, "Ceci est très-réel, et sera avoüé de toutes les personnes d'expérience." She might surely have left these curious eastern poems alone and have contented herself with a sincere acceptance of the mystic interpretation put upon them by her Church. In short, a profounder respect for St. Paul's last adjuration to the Thessalonians, "Study to be *quiet*, and mind your own business," would perhaps have spared us Madame Guion and Quietism as well.

In the court of the French king there can be no wonder that such doctrines spread like wildfire. To remain in a rapt state must have been a novelty as well as a rest to the Maintenon and her court. Inward silence, says Madame, is absolutely indispensable, because the Word is essential and eternal, and necessarily requires dispositions in the soul in some degree correspondent to his nature. The Quietism of Guion became a fashion, people dressed like devotees and went to prayers instead of to plays, psalms were sung in the place of love-songs, and with the greater zest because these psalms very often were possessed of a *double entendre* even more passionate than the love-song itself.

If any observer and prayër will look, in the calm lights of mild philosophy, upon the following verses of Madame Guion, he will no doubt not only become alarmed for the writer's sanity, but imagine that Guion has anticipated Béranger and others in celebrating the beauties of some earthly goddess, and the ardour which those beauties in-

spire. The accompanying illustration by Otho Vœnius is curious; a Cupid with the wings and quiver of Eros himself, but with the nimbus of the Saviour, offers to a female child of about the same size a vase to smell. The motto is "Jucundum spirat odorem," and the verses on the theme as follows:—

Il répand une odeur charmante.

Ah tirez-moi! mon Dieu, mon unique espérance,
Par vos parfums si précieux:
Déjà je me sentois tomber en défaillance,
Mais ce baume délicieux,
Fortifiant mon cœur, lui donne le courage
De courir après vous, d'y courir en tous lieux:
* * * * *
Retirez-vous, douceurs, plaisirs, faveurs, caresses;
O Dieu! c'est vous seul que je veux,
Vous êtes tout mon bien, ma force, ma richesses,
Vous seul pouvez me rendre heureux.
Je sens que ce parfum est d'un force extrême.

In another version she adopts the very language of the Canticles:—

L'odeur de tes parfums, si ravissans, si doux,
Enlévera les cœurs de ces vierges pudiques.

The English tongue is too manly for this eastern imagery of love. It is better in Latin or in French: "Fulcite me floribus, stipate me malis: quia amore langueo." "Fortifiez moi avec des pommes: parceque je languis d'amour." This seems to us hardly the language of prayer to a jealous God. The Guion breaks out yet more warmly:—

Ne m'abandonnez pas, mes Sœurs,
Environnez-moi de ces pommes

Qu'on trouve au jardin de l'Epoux,
Ah! cachez-moi de tous les hommes;
Et que je sois seule avec vous.

It must be confessed that this ecstatic poetry treads very closely on the heels of the amorous productions of the profanest of worldly minstrels.

No doubt there was much good to the dreamer and the ecstatic visionary in her book; and, if taken in the simple sense, it might have benefited all; but as it was, it was calculated to do evil. The Church of Rome is more active than our own; and the great Bossuet publicly condemned Guion's book, and (1695) imprisoned her in a convent; there he compelled her to explain away her chief passages, which she readily did. Let out of the convent, the Archbishop of Paris confined her in the Bastille, and condemned her books as containing "a monstrous and diabolical system." Fénelon defended her, and himself was condemned by Rome (1699); and it may be after all that Rome was right.

What Guion felt right for herself was wrong and foolish as a system. What is required to carry on God's world is not the sluggish inactivity of the cocoon or the sloth. We want the patience (suffering) of the saint, but the activity of the hero joined with it. Contemplation is necessary and good; but too much of it defeats its own end. Perhaps one of the most instructive things about this amiable but lazy type of religionists is the fact that they have been before condemned, in anticipation, by the Founder of the Gentlest Faith of all, in the parable of the

Talents. The man who did not waste, spend, destroy, nor soil his talent, hid it, free from rust and damp, in a napkin, and laid it in the earth, because he knew he had a taskmaster who reaped that which he had not sown, and took that up which he had not laid down. We know what condemnation followed on this man, who in one sense may be called a Hebrew Quietist.

AUREOLUS PHILIPPUS THEOPHRASTUS

PARACELSUS, BOMBAST OF

HOHENHEIM.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

A. Theophrasti Paracelsi de Presagiis, Vaticiniis, et Divinationibus. Stronomica item Astrologica fragmenta lectu jucunda et utilia. Basileæ, 1569.

Archidoxorum A. P. T. Paracelsi de Secretis Naturæ Mysteriis libri septem, &c. Basileæ, 1570.

Dictionarium T. Paracelsi continens obscuriorum vocabulorum, quibus in suis scriptis . . . utitur definitionem. Francoforti, 1584.

Les xiv *livres de Paragraphes de Ph. T. Paracelse, où sont contenus en épitome ses sécrets admirables, tant phisiques que chirurgiques pour la curation très certaine des maladies estimées incurables; à scavoir la Lèpre, l'Epilepsie, Hydropisée, Paralisie, Fièvres et autres, &c.* Paris, 1631.

Bombast von Hohenheim, Phil. Aureol. Theop. called Paracelsus, of the Supreme Mysteries of Nature; of the Spirits of the Planets; Occult Philosophy; the Magical, Sympathetical, and Antipathetical Cure of Wounds & Diseases. Englished by R. Turner. Φιλομαθής. London, 1656.

Philosophy Reformed and Improved, in four profound tractates. Made English for the increase of learning and true knowledge. London, printed for Lodowick Lloyd at the Castle in Cornhill, 1657.

Three Books of Philosophy written to the Athenians by that famous, most excellent, and approved Philosopher and Phisitian Aureal. Philip. Theop. Bombast of Hohenheim, commonly called Paracelsus. Done into English for the increase of the knowledge and the fear of God. By a young seeker of truth and holines. London, 1657.

Secretum omnium Secretorum, das ist, von der Heimlichkeit aller Heimlichkeiten (attributed to Paracelsus). 1676.

Paracelsus. By Robert Browning (A Poem). London, Effingham Wilson, 1835.

AUREOLUS PHILIPPUS THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS, BOMBAST OF HOHENHEIM.

THERE is one reason why we may wish spiritualism to be true, that thereby we might claim acquaintance with the dead. For a man shall not have lived long before he shall have passed the grand meridian, and may number more acquaintance with the dead than the living. More than this, if he be a reading man, there will be many with whom he would like to converse: he might wish to hob-a-nob with Robert Herrick; to drink deep draughts with Ben Jonson; to have really "a nicht wi' Burns." There be surely more of the dead than of the living whom we should care to know; for, in spite of the gruff Doctor's assertion, that a reasonable man of the world would rather dine with a great lord than with the greatest genius, we would rather have a quiet meal with Shakespeare than feast with twenty lords, and would delight to take our bread and cresses with Plato, St. John, and Bunyan. Such "an hour with the mystics," Spenser

and Heine dropping in, with Goethe in the company, such would outbid even a lord-mayor's supper, followed by a nightmare into the bargain. But of all men—more especially as they live in their own works, and we can enjoy them *en famille* without the intervention of the new light—those with whom one would choose chiefly to gossip would be Sir Thomas Browne, Peter Bayle, Montaigne, Hazlitt, and Coleridge, forming a select circle of "Friends in Council."

An evening, these being with us, might well be given to Nostradamus, Michael Scot, and Paracelsus. The last has had a singular fate. Unknown to many, his fame with some transcends that of any votary of science of his day, and, clothed in a nebulous mystery, looms largely in the far distant middle ages, ages receding rapidly from us, more rapidly every day. His portrait it would be difficult to portray fully. His boldness, loud boasting, and his dark history have made a great impression on the mind of one of our greatest, perhaps our greatest poet, who, from a poor original, has produced an ideal enchanter, a devotee of true science whom the world will not willingly let die. Pictured by himself, or by what remains of him, the physician is one who would in the garden of Paradise have plucked not one apple only, but a whole branch of the tree of knowledge, and would have greedily eaten the fruit thereof. But, after all, his is a face behind a veil, seen but faintly; "clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful," and never to be fully portrayed, or to be hawked about in one-and-sixpenny slides

for the world's stereoscopes. But others have loved him as well as I. A poet, whom the world rates not yet as he will be rated, hath written of him, painted him in the ideal, a knowledge-seeker, "one who desired to know," and did not care in what way he attained his end.

"That profound Philosopher and Phisytion Aureol[a] Philippus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast of Hohenheim, who was poysned y[e] 47th yeare of his age,"—we quote from the imprint of his lively Portraicture prefixed to a little Dryasdustian brown book,—was born of a noble father, noble *extra thorum*, Wilhelm Bombast von Hohenheim, about the year 1493. He added sometimes to his long name that of Eremus, and some dozen of other sounding titles, finishing all up with the words *utriusque Medicinæ Doctor*. Paracelsus was educated as a physician; what that education was it is not easy now to say. He had to grope his way amongst uncertainties, to swallow what we now know to be the veriest nonsense of old wives' tales,—to plunge into the mysteries of the cabala, to walk in darkness, to depend upon monkish tradition, and to mutter charms. Mystery and mysticism were his daily food in those dark ages; but he went forward boldly, and as boldly affirms that he had penetrated all secrets, had gone through the whole curriculum of philosophy, and had arrived at the knowledge of the secret things of life and the hidden virtues of nature. It is only by placing ourselves in his situation, before the birth of inductive philosophy, that we can arrive at any kind of stock-taking of our present knowledge. Little enough,

in good faith, do we ourselves know; weak, blind, and foolish is humanity now: but *then*, then, when all the vulgar errors Sir Thomas Browne has so well discoursed of were each texts and theorems,—then the darkness of ignorance must have been dense indeed!

Far afield went our "physition" to arrive even at the dawn. He travelled for ten years, between 1513 and 1523-4, visiting every celebrated college in Europe, and, like Plato and Pythagoras, wending eastward and looking to Egypt for his lore. He penetrated into Arabia, and conversed with sages and magicians; he tells us, in his own rich and gorgeous style, that he "turned over the leaves of Europe, Asia, Africa, and in so doing suffered much hardship; he fell into captivity, and bore arms as a soldier." More particularly did he traverse Spain, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Hungary, Muscovy, and then Asia. He spent some time in Persia, was taken prisoner by the Tartars, and carried before the Cham, by whom he was sent on a mission to Constantinople.

He studied the works of Raymond Lullius, of Villanova, and other adepts. Great was he upon transmutation of metals; he had found the *aurum potabile*, and talked with Jews, quacks, wizards and witches, boatmen, bathmen, and beggars. He boasts, as well he might, that he learnt more from strollers and gipsies than from the learned doctors of the schools. He gave and took; and, in return for knowledge thus acquired, cured hopeless maladies and desperate diseases—gout, dropsy, leprosy, and fevers of all kinds. He was received everywhere as the learned

doctor; and, vagabond and true Bohemian as he was, had acquired a fame which far outran him and reached his native country before its owner. But he was still poor, until a lucky chance led him to Basil, where Jacob Froben, a learned printer, lay suffering from an acute pain in his right foot, which no present leech could cure. This torture Froben had endured so long that he could neither eat nor sleep. Paracelsus was called in, attended to and bathed the patient's foot, and then exhibited his grand specific, which, as we may gather, was laudanum; three little black balls—*tres pillulas nigras*—did Froben swallow with, to him, immense service. He slept, his faith in physic was restored, and in a short time he was a sound man. He died, however, some months after of apoplexy. "He could not be persuaded to follow the advice of his judicious physician. The man, in fact, was old and apoplectic, and he died, careless of consequences." So says Erasmus, who believed in very little; but, to the glory of Paracelsus, he believed in him, and in his *magistrale arcanum*, his grand specific.

The cure of this apoplectic printer raised Paracelsus to a pinnacle of glory. He was elected to the chair of medicine of Basil, and in this position gave vent to some of that grandiloquent spirit which seems to have inflated the old alchemists, as it did that magnificent creation of Ben Jonson, Sir Epicure Mammon. To the strange weird teaching of Paracelsus—to that apotheosis of mundane knowledge and intellect, when the lay mind of the age, for a moment freed from the priests, seemed about to

arise in its strength, and snatch new triumphs from the sky,—to this teaching flocked the youth of Germany, of France, and Italy. The minstrel and the poet, the free-lance and *jongleur*, the sucking physician and the lawyer, the unfrocked monk and the layman, in quest of more than the priestly schools could teach them, were alike ready to listen, to admire, to applaud. There is in the museum at Antwerp a strange painting of the period of which we are writing, representing the procession to the crucifixion of our Lord. There, too, all the trades of the world are seen—types of all the people who aided in the cruel work—flocking forwards to the sight. There come the pedlars and tinkers, musician, artist, and handicrafts-man; there, too, the scholar and priest, joking, thickly pressed together, pushing each other, chaffing, laughing, full of life, eager to watch for the Death,—there they are, the very images of the townsmen and countrymen of the painter, who has taken care—surely not in ignorance, but with some meaning*—to picture the ruffians of the Jewish mob in the costume of his own age. What kind of import and signification would such a crucifixion have painted in the costumes of our day: with our high or low church curate, our dean and doctor, sleek tradesman, smug bishop, and ladies with ample crinoline? Would it not bring the reality home to men's business and bosoms?

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* Thus, in Bernard Zan's piece of Abraham about to sacrifice his son Isaac *with a horse-pistol*, the anachronism is at once great and exceedingly droll, but surely intended.

Such a mob, as portrayed by the, to me, unknown painter, listened to the orations of Paracelsus. He discarded the learned tongue, and lectured in German. He sent a new thrill through the untaught bosoms of the people. He was not one to hide his light under a bushel; but, as he poured forth his words, told his audience freely that he knew more than all the old school put together. Shouting aloud in the plenitude of his self-love, he took, in the sight of his audience, a brazen vase, from which flames darted, and in which he placed nitre and sulphur; and when the lurid flame blazed up, he cast in the works of Galen, Avicenna, and the Arab doctors, shouting out at the same time, "Thus, doctors, shall ye burn in everlasting fire! Behind me!" he continued; "get thee behind me,—*arrière-moi, Grec, Latin, Arab!* Ye have told hitherto but old wives' tales. The secret of all nature belongs to me."

It is not alone Paracelsus who has railed at his brothers in the healing art, not he alone has called their shops *colluvies jusculorum*—slop-receptacles; but whoever has done so has, we may well know, braved the hatred of all the rest of the pulse-feeling tribe. The possibility of a doctor making the sick man worse is no novelty in our own day; nor was it in his. We can trace it down through ages. Martial has a good epigram, one out of nearly thirty, against the tribe:—

> I slightly ailed; a hundred doctors come
> (With finger icy-tipp'd and gelid thumb),
> Prescribe their nostrums vile, to purge or bleed:—
> At first I ailed; but now I'm sick indeed.

And we may remember that Sir Godfrey offered to take anything of Dr. Radcliffe save his physic; and Garrick would accept any present of Sir John Hill save his professional advice, which he contemned. But, notwithstanding these quips and cranks, it is a bold thing to raise one's voice against the killing and draughting tribe; and Paracelsus raised a host of enemies by his outcry against established favourites. He was like Ishmael; but he laid about him fiercely, and had salt in him.

A recent writer on the subject has noticed the obvious fact that,—"In the time of Paracelsus patients were even more unfortunate than in our days. Materia medica, or the arsenal from which the physicians drew their weapons, contained a mass of heterogeneous substances, the selection of which the most grotesque fancy, rather than the wisdom of the sage, appeared to have regulated. Therapeutics resembled one of those armouries in which tomahawks and arms from Patagonia are laid by the side of the more effective weapons used in modern warfare. If the human body is a chemical laboratory, it was then intrusted with transmutations which modern science has rejected as impossible. The old pharmaceutical catalogues present horrors far surpassing those of Bluebeard's forbidden chamber; for in those lists are seen scattered about, not the limbs of poets, not the headless trunks of lovely women, but the different parts of apes, lions, bats, serpents, toads—of almost all known European beasts, and of many exotic animals besides, changed 'from their ordinance to monstrous quality'—to remedies given, not on

account of any empirically beneficial effect of theirs, but solely because of the mystical correspondence supposed to exist between them and the diseases they were made to combat. In affections of the liver, for instance, a dried wolf's liver was prescribed, or a donkey's liver, pounded in honey. Scorpions and spiders were ingurgitated whole. Zwelfer extolled the virtues of the toad against the plague. Moles on the face could be cured by being touched with a dead man's hand, which was to be kept on the face till it became warm. Van Helmont, having almost been stared to death by a toad, recovered by the use of treacle and the powder of vipers. The medicine of those days, half superstitious, half scientific, resembles those illustrations in old medical books, which display a strange mixture of stern and sentimental occurrences, which represent a surgeon boring a patient's head with a gouge, while surrounding ladies are wringing their hands, crying, or praying; while, by a touch of satirical symbolism, a cat is portrayed devouring a mouse in a corner. What would a modern patient say, if, having succeeded in deciphering his doctor's prescription, he read, '*mus combustus*'? He would probably like to be allowed eggs for breakfast, but scarcely 'eggs of frog or lizard.' A lady in hysterics might not perceive the efficacy of 'deer's tears, dried'! Consumptive persons might object to '*pulmones preparati*,' prepared lungs of fox. Pale persons would scarcely relish an infusion of the blood of 'bat,' 'rhinoceros,' 'rat,' &c. And yet all these things were prescribed and taken in the 'good old times.' But there were many more remedies—

'Abominable, unutterable, and worse.'

Every organ, every secretion or excretion of every strange animal was used in medicine. The ludicrous and grotesque sometimes give place to the horrible in these nomenclatures. Thus we find that the fat of a hanged man was good; powder of human skull had many virtues, and cured Boyle 'radically' of a bleeding of the nose. A beheaded man's blood was beneficial when drunk yet warm; a human skin, well tanned, worn, used as a belt, had a restorative efficacy."

But our physician himself, although he abused his brethren, seems to have been but little wiser. Let the following extracts from one of his books* bear this testimony at least. The first is a somewhat long dissertation on the virtues of the herb *Persicaria*, or water-pepper, to which liberal shepherds, as well as our English translator, "give a grosser name."

"But now to show you the virtues of this herb: as soon as you have pulled it out of the ground, draw it through water, or through the streams of a river or a spring, which is best of all, then lay it upon that part which is to be cured so long as you may be eating half an egg, then take it away and bury it in a moist place, where it may rot,

* In consequence of the long list of books consulted in this article, we have given the title of this one in a note:—"Paracelsus his Dispensatory and Chirugery (the Dispensatory contains the choisest of his Physical remedies, and all that can be desired of his Chirugery, you have in the treatises of Wounds, Ulcers, and Aposthumes). Faithfully Englished by W. D. London, 1656."

and as it putrifies the sore heals; some do sign the signe of the crosse and use a kind of prayer for it; but such doings are impertinent and absurd; for the operation of the herb is natural, not superstitious or magical." But at other times he can use the magical and supernatural way of cure freely, and in his Celestial Medicines he speaks thus of preserving the sight without physic:—

"Make thee a round *lamen* of the best lead in the hour of ♀, the ☽ being in the signe ♈, and in the same hour, to wit in the hour of ♀, engrave the signes and letters which you will see written in the following figure. Afterwards in the hour of ♄ make a *copper lamen* of the same quantity and form as the leaden one; when ☽ is in the signe ♌, the characters which you will see in the figure are to be engraven thereon, &c. These are to be enclosed in wax, so that they receive no moisture, sewn in a piece of silk, and hung about the neck of a patient in the day and hour of ☿." This, Paracelsus assures us, is the best remedy to recover the sight of the eyes and to preserve the eyes from pain and disease. "It preserveth the sight in old age as perfect as it was in youth." One lamen in the engraving is about the size of a penny piece of George III; the smaller about the circumference of one of the godless florins of Victoria.

While venting such stuff as this, in which it is hard to believe that he himself could have had any faith, Paracelsus does not forget to attack his opponents; and, after treating of the spider, "a hateful creature," he says, "Having done with these hateful and poysonous creatures, now I

will speak concerning other common and contemptible small creatures; and I hope I shall not be blamed for this, nor shall these things I speak be esteemed as famed tales, as false physicians do who will not use any common medicines, such as may be gotten cheaply and easily, not remembering this, that God hath created nothing in vain, but that even the least and most contemptible things have their peculiar virtues according to His divine pleasure." No doubt this severe recital served our physician well; he pretended by lowly study to have penetrated the secrets of Nature and to be able to instruct mankind. That the present generation may not miss his great gift, it will be as well to transcribe firstly a cure for warts, which our schoolboy readers can easily try; and secondly, an infallible cure for any wound, which will serve both our soldiers, our volunteers, and but too often our civilians.

"*To cure warts.* Take oyl of juniper berries one ounce, th oyl of spike two drams, oleum laterinum, or buck oyl, seven drams; mix them, and with this anoint the warts."

"*A potion* which being drunk *will cure any wound!* Take of adder's tongue three handfuls, of periwinkle the lesser one handful, of honeysuckle one handful and a half, of rheubarbe one ounce, of rhaponticke three ounces: put them into two gallons of water, boyl it to six quarts, or put them into new ale or new beer four or five days, then let the patient drink of it."

We may laugh at Paracelsus now; but in skill he was ahead of his rivals. He cured a judge, saved the life of a canon residentiary with three black pellets,—*tres murini*

stercoris pillulas,—some say compounded of his secret medicine, opium, which, we presume, he got from the East. When the canon was cured, he would not pay the fee: the dose was so small, the charge so large. Paracelsus summoned his patient before the judges. They, stupid fellows! only ordered the ordinary fee; and our magical doctor, in a torrent of indignant eloquence, abused the judges. Few can help siding with him now. Nor, indeed, was our physician to blame. Bayle has remarked that in the middle ages the fees of physicians were enormous. In his article on Petrus Aponensis he tells us that that clever man, who, like Paracelsus, was suspected of magic, would not go out of town to visit the sick under 150 francs a day; a large sum, since the money was worth at least fifteen times as much as it is now. Being sent for by the Pope Honorius IV, Aporius, or Aponensis, demanded four hundred ducats a day. Vander Linden relates the same thing, but without naming the patient. Bayle quotes another physician mentioned by Lancelot de Perouse as claiming 100 crowns a day, and as returning from the Pope richer by 10,000 crowns. The same story, with some variation, is told of Paul Freher, professor of medicine at Bologna, that he was sent for from all parts of Italy, but never left his town under fifty crowns a day, and that for curing Honorius he received 1000 crowns. Variations enough, says Bayle, truly; Honorius must have paid his physicians highly, and Paracelsus may plead precedents.

What evil has been done by weak and incompetent purveyors of the law from Pontius Pilatus downwards! Marry,

is *this* the law? No wonder that Paracelsus devoted his judges to that place wherein he had already deposited the doctors. No wonder also, when the officers looked for him the next day, that he, dreading the ire of the magnates, had fled.

He left at Basil his chemicals, tests, and laboratory, in charge of Oporinus, his scholar and friend, who filled towards him the place which Wagner does to Faustus in Marlowe's play; and it is from this Oporinus, an ungrateful apostate, and afterwards—therefore perhaps, O world! —a rich and highly-respected citizen of Basil, that we learn something of the inner life of Paracelsus. With Oporinus, then a young and hungry scholar, the great master also left his *magistrale arcanum*, laudanum, which some time afterwards saved his life. It is possible, we hope probable, for the sake of the physician, that the relation of Oporinus is greatly exaggerated. "Adeo erat totis diebus et noctibus, dum ego familiariter per biennium fere convixi, ebrietati et crapulæ deditus," &c. "Thus, whilst I chummed with him for nearly two years, was he both by night and day given to gluttony and drunkenness. Hardly was he sober for one hour, whilst he went forth from Basil to Alsatia amongst the noble rustics and the rustic nobles, healing them and teaching them, and everywhere received like another Æsculapius. He was a wonder to and the admiration of all. In the mean time, in his most drunken moments, he would return home, and dictate to me some of his wild philosophy. Nor did he ever put off his clothes in the night-time during the two years I was

with him; but, girt about with his sword, which, he boasted, had been that of some executioner, he would lie down on his couch, drunken with wine, towards the small hours of the morning. In a short time he would arise in the dead waste of darkness, and lay about him with his naked sword; now striking the bed, the floor, the door-posts, or the walls, in so wild a manner that I more than once feared for the safety of my head (*ut ego non semel caput amputatum iri metuerem*)."

Melchior Adam tells us, in addition to this, that he would often embrace this man-slaying sword, boasting that in the pommel of it was enclosed his Azoth, his familiar imp,* and that with this imp he would hold conversation, and talk wildly; but Melchior Adam states that perhaps he had only a bit of the true stone therein.

Possessed, then, of "that thirsty devil whose name is Quaff," to quote Luther, when speaking of his own countrymen, we need not wonder that the respectabilities of the

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* Bumbastes kept a devil's bird
Shut in the pummel of his sword;
That taught him all the cunning pranks
Of past and future mountebanks.
Hudibras, part ii. cant. 3.

Ne yet of guacum one small stick, Sir,
Nor Raymond Lully's great elixir;
Ne had he known the Danish foxwort,
Or *Paracelsus* with his long sword.
Jonson's *Volpone*, act ii. sc. 2.

various towns in which he stayed did not consort with him. He had offended the lawyers and the doctors, and he was about to insult the third great power—the clerics. He is a strong man who, in this roundabout world, dare fight against law, physic, and divinity. Paracelsus attempted it, and was wofully beaten. Called in one day to a dying peasant, he observed with him a priest, who held something to his lips. "Has the patient taken anything?" asked Theophrastus. "Nothing," answered the priest; "I was about to give him the Corpus Christi." "If he has called in another physician," returned the leech, "he doth not need me;" and he forthwith departed.

Whatever excuse may be made for this hasty and, looked at from a religious point, very profane speech,—whether the maker perceived that his patient was beyond help, or whether he only girded at the priest,—we know not; but the outcry raised against him was immense, and he was again about to fly. Oporinus joined the great body of respectables, taking with him what he could of his master's secrets, by which soon after, it is related, he saved his own life; and arose to be professor of Greek at Basil. He afterwards devoted his life to the profession of a printer, and died, full of years and honour, in 1568.

With his magic drug, his Azoth and Astoroth, and his great, bold, braggadocio heart, Paracelsus again set forward in life. He spent some time in Bavaria, where he healed a nobleman; some months in Poland, where he cured the king's physician. Everywhere he and his potent drug became celebrated, but he grew not rich. He was born

out of his time,—after or before it, what matters? He was a wanderer, a Bohemian, a crapulous and drunken man—drunken with great passions and a strong scorn of the world. He who could have achieved everything which the world then thought great, threw away his time, and did little. Towards the end of his life some small honours were forced upon him. In 1536 he dedicated his *Chirurgia Major* to the Emperor of Germany, vindicated the character of his father and his own right to the succession of the property left by him, ruffled it with the nobles, talked with and astonished priests, made a convert of the Archbishop of Salzburg, and was by him persuaded to settle in that city. But he did not long enjoy his settlement, dying, after a lingering illness, in 1541, aged forty-eight years. The portrait affixed to the little brown book affirms, in the legend under it, that he "was poysned" in the forty-seventh year of his age; upon what authority we know not. They who assert that Paracelsus boasted of having discovered the Elixir of Life, add, no doubt for the sake of antithesis, that he "died with a bottle of his immortal Catholicon in his pocket;" but, as these worthies must be aware that there are some complaints in which laudanum, his Catholicon, cannot be exhibited, they might charitably have supposed that he died of one of these. He left a very full and particular will; and with a portion of his fortune his executors built the hospital of St. Sebastian, in Salzburg, where his tablet is yet to be seen, entitling him an "insignis doctor," curer of leprosy, gout, and dropsy, who left his goods to the poor, and on the

date mentioned exchanged this life for a better, *vitam cum morte mutavit.* His portrait was painted by Tintoretto, and shows us a bold hard face, with a good forehead, a prominent nose, a determined chin, and heroic bearing, bull-throated, broad-shouldered, *sic occulos, sic ora tulit.** This portrait we have engraved on our title-page.

It will now be as well to glance at this master's works. The translator of the two tracts of Paracelsus and Croillus has told us, truly enough, that in both we shall meet with "some uncouthe and unusuall words," which for better "understandinge" he has taken upon himself to explain. Thus the Adecte, he tells us, is the invisible and inward man, which shapeth those things in the mind that are afterwards done with the hands. This is an explanation of the connection between the will and the muscles not at present dreamt of. The world also stands, we are told, upon the Archaltes, pillars or supports something like those of Hercules: whereon these pillars rest even this prince of "physitions" does not inform us. We may judge, however, that the world is as flat as the dial of a watch, and that the Yankee's wish, that he could walk right away to the edge and peep over, is not impracticable.

But with what curious and wondrous dreams did not our early chemists lull themselves to sleep! As the knight rode through the crowds of water-spirits in La Motte Fouqué's story, and as St. Anthony in the old paintings is surrounded by troops of spirits, so also myriads swarmed

* Epig. by Christ. Manlius.

round the brain of the old alchemists. Archeus was the chief invisible spirit, the occult virtue, the artificer in every one. Dases was the secret vapour, the spirit from which wood grows; and from the occult vapour Enur stones were formed and grew in water. Hagæ were spirits who knew the secret things of men; the Gnomes, made popular by Pope's poem, were little men scarce half a foot high, spirits, but living under the earth; and the Lemures were either the spirits and elements of water, or those of the dead come to life again. By the Penates our physician understood, not those household gods with whom our early lessons in Virgil made us acquainted, but spirits of the earth and of the element of fire; the Sylps were pigmies or dwarfs; the Travames, the actions of the spirits and ghosts of dead men, heard but not seen.

Surrounded by these and by others, the philosopher of the middle ages, or indeed the priest, nun, or peasant with any imagination, could not have lived a very quiet life. No wonder at their ghosts and midnight fears and horrors. No wonder that darkness terrified them out of their wits. We should not love to be subject to the continued interruption of any of the above; nay, nor to be courted by the Melosinæ, "despairing women now living in a phantastaticall bruittish body, nourished by the elements into which they will be changed, unless they chaunce to marrie with a manne."

Let us first ascertain this accomplished physician's manner of accounting for the creation, a subject which puzzles great philosophers even now. He divides his mat-

ter into texts; and the first, by a marginal note, we find is this: "The great mysterie is the mother of all things." This ejaculation is expanded in the text in this manner: "All created things are of a fraill and perishing nature, and had all at first but one only principle or beginning. In this principle all things under the cope of heaven were enclosed and lay hid; which is thus to be understood, that all things proceeded out of one *matter*, and not every particular thing out of its own private matter by itselfe. This common matter of all things is the *Greate Mysterie*, which no certain essence or prefigured or formed idea could comprehend, nor could it comply with any property, it being altogether void of colour and elementary nature. The scope of this greate mysterie is as large as the firmament. *And the greate mysterie was the mother of all the elements, and the grandmother of all the starrs, trees, and carnall creatures.* As children are born of a mother, so all created things, whether sensible or insensible, all things whatsoever were uniformly brought out of the great mysterie. So that the greate Mysterie is the one mother of all perishing things, out of which they all sprung, not in order of succession or continuation, but they came forth together and at once, in one creation, substance, matter, form, essence, nature and inclination." After this we are not much wiser than before; but it must be owned that Paracelsus has a certain grand manner of venting nothing.

That water is a compound of oxygen and hydrogen, two measures of the latter to one of the former, every reader of the most elementary treatise on natural philosophy now

knows. The following will perhaps therefore serve as well as any other citation to help us to ascertain the amount of true chemical science possessed by Paracelsus. Text 17 is on "the various complexions of water," and is as follows: "Nor did water obtaine one kind of complexion onely. For there were infinite waters in that Element, which yet were all truly waters. The Phylosopher cannot understand that the Element of water is onely cold and moyst of it selfe. It is an hundred times more cold, and not more moyst, and yet it is not to be refer'd as well to the hotnesse as the coldnesse. Nor doth the element of water live and flourish onely in cold and moyst in one degree: no neither is it fully and wholly of one degree. Some waters are fountaines, which are of many sorts. Some are seas, which also are many and divers. Other are streams and rivers and none of which is like another. Some watry elements were disposed of into stones, as Berill, Chrystal, Calcedony, Amethyst. Some into plants, as Corall, &c. Some into juyce, as the liquor of life. Many in the earth, as the moysture of the ground. These are the Elements of water, but in a manifold sort. For that which groweth out of the earth, from the seed that was sown, that also belongs to the element of water. So what was fleshy as the Nymphs belong also to the element of water. Though in this case we may conceive that the element of water was changed into another complexion, yet it doth never put off or passe from that very nature of the element from which it proceeded. Whatsoever is of the water, turneth again to water: that which is of fire

into fire; that of earth into earth; and that of aire into aire." From which it is very plain that our physician did not know what fire or water was.

Nor is he any wiser as to the electricity and electric storms of the air; for "thunder," he writes, "comes from the procreations of the firmament, because that consisteth of the element of fire. Thunder is, as it were, the harvest of the stars at the very instant of time when it was ready to work according to its nature. *Magicall tempests rise out of the aire and there end.*" This is poetically grand. What follows has much more of the comic element in its floundering braggadocio. "Many things proceed out of the store (i.e. of nature) through mistake, or in (un)due time. *Deformed men, wormes,* and many more such like generations, proceed from the impressions. The infection of countries, the *plague* and *famine,* is from the *fatall stormes.* Beetles, cankers, dalnes (?), breed in dung. To the elements did there but four special kindes of the great mystery belong, so they had but four principles. But men had six hundred. *Crump-feeted men* had one, the *Ciclopes* another. *Gyants* another, the *Medchili* another. So had they that dwell in the *earth,* in the *aire,* in the *water,* and in the fire. Things that also grow had every one its own proper mysterie in the *Greate Mysterie* whence came out so many kinds of creatures. So many trees, so many men, so many mysteries too."

Even when Paracelsus leaves his windy discourse on things of which he knows nothing, for a few moments,

and tells us that "Earthy men are not happy," as he does in the eleventh text of the second book of his philosophy, he is sensible only for a short time. The following sentence might have been written by Sir Thomas Browne or have been penned by Ruskin: "It is a silly and vain philosophy to place all happiness and eternity in our element of earth. A foolish opinion is it to boast that we only are of all creatures the most noble. *There are more worlds than one;* nor are there none besides us in our own. But this ignorance is much more capitall that we know not those men that are of the same element with us, as the Nocturnals, Gnomes, &c. who, though they live not in the clear glory of heaven, nor have any light of the firmament, but hate what we love, and love what we hate, and though they are not like us in form, essence, or sustentation; yet is there no cause of wonder. For they were made such in the great mystery. We are not all that are made; there are many more whom we know not of."

Would that all that Paracelsus had written were like to this, but, alas! his medical writings are full of credulity or imposture. He believed, or pretended to believe, that man could himself create or make a child resembling those born of women, only smaller and weaker, and his directions for this strange proceeding are, says a critic very justly, "too absurd and indecent to be quoted." He tells us that "Stannar is the mother of metals, and that metals are nothing but thickened smoke from

stannar; that man is composed of smoke, 'Man is a coagulated fume,' and that the coagulation of the spermatick matter is made of nothing but the seething vapours and spermatick members of the body. We see nothing in our own selves but thickened smoke made up into a man by humane predestination." Moreover, "fiery dragons and ghosts proceed from stones;" and "things invisible eat and are nourished as well as things visible," about which, at least, he could know nothing. He attempts closely to explain the analogy which he supposes to exist between the Macrocosmos or external world and the Microcosmos or human body, and believed that every physician ought to be able to point out in man the east and west and the signs of the Zodiac, according, indeed, to that ancient catalogue still printed in Zadkiel's and Moore's almanacs. He tells us that the human body contains, or rather consists of nothing but mercury, sulphur, and salt. He recommends people, in curing a wound, to use the *verba constellata*, or astrological and cabalistic words, which would effect a certain cure when all other methods had failed.

"He made great use of cabalistic writers," says Tennemann ("Manual of Philosophy"), "which he endeavoured to render popular, and expounded with a lively imagination." He belonged to the school of the Mystics, and has himself founded a school. His mystic notions were many, chief amongst them are those of an emanation from the Deity, of an internal illumination, of the influence of the stars, of the vitality of the elements,

which, as we have before seen, he thought were fed and nourished, and of the universal harmony of all things.

In the notes to his wonderful poem, which the public at first received somewhat coldly,* Browning asserts that the Azoth of Paracelsus shut in the pommel of his sword was merely his specific laudanum; and Brande, in his "Manual of Chemistry," tells us "that through his discoveries, original discoveries were few and unimportant; his great merit lies in the boldness and assiduity which he displayed in introducing chemical preparations into the 'Materia Medica,' and in subduing the prejudices of the Galenical physicians against the productions of the laboratory. But, though we can fix upon no particular discovery on which to found his merits as a chemist, and though his writings are deficient in the acumen and knowledge displayed by several of his contemporaries and immediate successors, it is undeniable that he gave a most important turn to pharmaceutical chemistry, and calomel, with a variety of mercurial and antimonial preparations, as likewise opium, came into general use."

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* I have a copy of the first edition, of which probably only a very small number were printed. The preface is dated March, 1835, and the book was published by Effingham Wilson. A list of Mr. Moxon's books, dated 1846, is stitched up with it, and reveals the fact that eleven years had passed away, but that the first edition of one of the most remarkable poems written had *not* passed out of print. To compare this neglect with the present estimation of Browning will be both instructive and consolatory to unsuccessful poets.

The notices which Mr. Hallam accords to Paracelsus are by no means few, but they are very unfavourable. He regards him in his truest light, that of a poetical quack. "Germany," which Hallam truly says "is the native soil of mysticism in Europe, is fond of the unintelligible dreams of the school of Paracelsus." The tendency to reflex observation in the German mind was at that time accompanied with a profound sense of the presence of Deity; "yet one which, acting on their thoughtful spirits, became rather an impression than an intellectual judgment, and settled into a mysterious indefinite theopathy, when it did not evaporate in pantheism." The tendency to evaporate in pantheism is shown in the philosophy of Paracelsus, by his account of gnomes, sylphs, sylvesters, montanes, and tonnets, of which I have before spoken, and to the creation of which, long before Pope had used the machinery for his poem, Paracelsus has as much a right to be credited as any one. He was followed by a whole school of mystics, in which Jacob Boehm and even Swedenborg may be classed.

"His chemical theories," Hallam says, "descended from Paracelsus through Van Helmont, and were propagated chiefly by Sylvius, a physician of Holland. His leading principle was that a perpetual fermentation goes on in the human body, from the deranged action of which diseases proceed; most of them from an excess of acidity, though few are of alkaline origin." "He degraded the physician," says Sprengel, "to the level of a distiller or a

brewer."* There are many who will even now question whether this theory be not the true one after all; if so, medicine does indeed owe much to Paracelsus, even in spite of his followers the Rosicrucians. These held that a man who was a true Rosicrucian had only to look at a patient to cure him. This seems to be merely the first faint budding forth of the doctrine of magnetic cure. "All things," says Croillus, or Croll, of Hesse, a theosophist after Paracelsus' own heart, "in the Macrocosm are found also in the Microcosm. The inward and actual man is Gaballis, from which the science is named. This Gaballis or imagination is as a magnet to external objects, which it thus attracts. Medicines act by a magnetic force."†

This Gabalistic force or art which produces by natural imagination and faith, "per fidem naturalem ingenitam," all magical operations, and indeed all those wonderful changes that man can wish for in health or disease within his Microcosm, is descanted upon continually by Paracelsus. Man has two elements in his body, a sidereal and material element; and this actual or sidereal part of him survives after death, and will explain the apparitions of the dead: but it is useless to again refer to his assertions, and, indeed, I may conclude with our chief literary historian, perhaps too much has been said about paradoxes so absurd and mendacious: but literature is a garden of weeds as well

* Hallam, *Literature of Europe*, vol. iii. p. 599.

† Sprengel, iii. 362, quoted also by Hallam.

as of flowers; and Paracelsus forms a link in the history of opinion which should not be overlooked.

Syllvesters, satyres, montans and tonnets, undens and melogens, vulcanals, salamanders, tumdel, and luperi, are now all laid, thank Heaven, to sleep, unless they shall be again brought into fashion by our modern rapparees. It needs this peep into mediæval darkness to assure us that we live in an age of progress and of light. We have, like Lear in the storm, thrown off these fantastic lendings—these rags and remnants of the mythology which the Greeks and Romans left us. If Paracelsus believed in them, which we doubt, seeing that he was mystic above all things, he yet believed in mercury and laudanum, two of the most powerful props of modern medical science. He should be honoured, therefore, even whilst we recall, with Coleridge, the old belief in gnomes and spirits:—

> Oh, never rudely will I blame his faith
> In the might of stars and angels. . . . .
> For still the heart doth need a language; still
> Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,
> Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth
> With man as with their friend; and to the lover
> Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
> Shoot influence down: and even at this day
> 'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
> And Venus who brings everything that's fair.

This poetical superstition seems just now to be flickering up for the last time, the same in spirit, but corporeally audible in knocks, cracks, and jumping chairs and tables. After all, until this dies out, it were better perhaps to go

back to the unadulterated spirit-world of Paracelsus—to his Lemures, his Azoth, his Catholicon, and his Elixir Vitæ.

Referring to the death of Paracelsus, an author who is more picturesque and startling than his facts warrant him to be, tells us that Paracelsus "died, after a few hours' illness, with a bottle of his immortal Catholicon in his pocket." Of this statement nothing is known, save that the illness was not sudden. His will, executed St. Matthew's day, September 21st, 1541, says that the testator is sick in body but sound in mind. It is dated from his chamber in the inn, the "White Horse," where he then resided. He is described as "the venerable and most learned Doctor Theophrastus ab Hohenheim." Ready money, rings, precious stones, plate, books, and clothes, some of the curiosities and antiquities gathered in his travels, made up the chief part of his property, which, with the exception of some legacies to his friends and nearest of kin, he ordered to be expended in charitable purposes; and his executors carried out his wishes by bestowing it on the Hospital of St. Sebastian, in the precincts of which he desired to be buried.

On a mural tablet in the chapel of the Hospital is the following memorial of the once famous doctor:—

Conditur hic
PHILIPPUS THEOPHRASTUS,
Insignis Medicinæ Doctor,
Qui
dira illa vulnera
Lepram, Podagram, Hydropisin,
o

aliaque insanabilia corporis contagia
mirifica arte sustulit;
ac bona sua in pauperes collocanda
distribuendaq: erogavit.
Anno MDXXXXI. die XXIV. Septembris,
vitam cum morte mutavit.*

Possibly there is little in the history of the real Paracelsus to bear out the noble aspiration of Browning in his Ideal; but there can be no question of the purity of that poet's ideal, nor of the beauty of the language in which it is apostrophized. The spirit of Bombast von Hohenheim must have been pleased by this address:—

Men look up to the sun!
For after-ages shall retrack thy beams,
And put aside the crowd of busy ones,
And worship thee alone—the master-mind,
The thinker, the explorer, the creator!
I recognise thee first;
I saw thee rise, I watched thee early and late,
And though no glance revealed thou dost accept
My homage—thus no less I proffer it,
And bid thee enter gloriously thy rest!

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* It may be as well here to add the epigram on the engraving from which our portrait is taken. It was supplied by Christopher Manlius of Görlitz, and may be received as a testimony to the fidelity of the painter, just as Ben Jonson's lines on the Droeshout portrait of Shakespeare prove that its fidelity was as great as its art was small; otherwise the epigram, especially the second verse, which we omit, is but a versification of names and dates.

Stemmate nobilium genitus Paracelsus avorum,
Quâ vetus Helvetiâ claret Eremus humo:
Sic oculos, sic ora tulit, cum plurima longum
Discendi studio per loca fecit iter.

HOWELL THE TRAVELLER.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ; Familiar Letters, Domestic and Foreign, divided into Four Books, partly Historical, Political, Philosophical, upon Emergent Occasions. By James Howell. 1688.

Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ; Familiar Letters, Domestic and Forren, Historical, Political, and Phylosophical, upon Emergent Occasions. By James Howel, Esq., one of the Clerkes of His Majesties' Most Honourable Privy Council. 7th edition. 1705.

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HOWELL THE TRAVELLER.

EPISTOLÆ-HO-ELIANÆ.

ARCHDEACON PALEY said that the best letter was that which came most directly to the purpose; and his definition is a sound one. The polite involutions, curious turns, quaint images, and hyperbolical compliments with which our grandfathers tickled the fancies of our grandmothers and great-aunts, should be, and luckily have been, swept away. Letter-writing to some is a pastime; to many it is a passion. With ladies this passion soon grows into a disease, and when they are under its influence it is astonishing what long letters they will write upon the slightest subject, and how, if encouraged, a perennial spring of correspondence will gush from them. If suffering badly from this mania, they are always "gushing;" but since the disease would appear to be inevitable, it may be well that they should take it in the best possible form; and, if

a doctor be careful of the *virus* he chooses for vaccination, surely we should be particular in the choice of the "Familiar" letter writer from which our relatives first "take the venom of a lady's pen." Basing ourselves upon Paley's dictum, we may be somewhat astonished to find that, in an age of euphemistic periphrasis, James Howell arrived at once at the highest point of excellence. His familiar letters, on subjects the enumeration of even a few of which would occupy too much of our space, are models of what letters should be—humorous or serious, affectionate or severe, as the case may require, but practical, clear, concise, and always direct and to the point. There is something also very manly and delightful in their style; and the reading, good-humour, and knowledge of life they display are immense. Hence, of upwards of forty different publications by this clever travelled gentleman, his letters alone remain to us: and these are read again and again, each time with a greater zest and pleasure by the true lover of old literature.

Travelling, in Howell's days, was as fashionable, if not as easy, an amusement as it is now. We leave it to the black letter critics to determine the important question whether Shakespeare had ever been to Scotland, or to Paris, or had "swum in a gondola." His descriptions of Italian scenery are sufficiently accurate to warrant the supposition that he had visited the latter country. But if he was not actually a traveller, the majority of the more fortunately born and richer gentlemen of his day were, as well as the poor scholars, who, mustering their few gold

pieces, went afoot like William Lithgow, for "thirtie and sixe thousande of miles, perfitting his long nineteen years travel by surveying forty-eight kingdoms, twenty-one republics, ten absolute principalities, and two hundred islands," said William, finishing his journeys (and being himself finished, poor fellow!) by torture at Malaga, where he was arrested as an English spy. Of greater education than he was a son of the Archbishop of York, William Sandys, an accomplished gentleman, scholar, and traveller; to which titles James Howell also may lay claim. Born in Carmarthenshire in 1596 (one child of fifteen, as he tells us incidentally), Howell was educated at Hereford and Oxford, and repaired to London in 1617. There is abundant evidence that graduates of the Universities and gentlemen of good family were not averse to trade in that age; and, although the dramatists and courtiers satirized the citizens, still the sons of knights and noblemen sought employment of the merchants and chief traders for their sons. James Howell was appointed steward of a London glass factory, and in 1619 went abroad in that capacity to perfect his knowledge and engage "gentlemen workmen." He travelled till 1621, corresponding in the meantime with high dignitaries and noblemen (one of his brothers was Bishop of Bristol), and on his return still followed his stewardship. This connection of business with literature, which undoubtedly did him good, lasted for some time. Upon its cessation he became a travelling companion; then a Government agent to Spain—where he was witness to "Babie's" and "Steenie's" romantic

attempt at a Spanish marriage. Next he became Secretary to Lord Scrope as President of the North; was then elected member for Richmond, in which post he remained nearly four years; and afterwards went to Copenhagen as Secretary to the British Ambassador. In 1640 he was made Clerk of the Council by Charles I, and three years afterwards was, by the Parliament, imprisoned in the Fleet, where he maintained himself by translating and working for the booksellers. After the King's death he was released, and at the Restoration was made our first "historiographer royal," in which position he continued using his pen till the year of the great fire, 1666, when he died.

From so busy a life we should expect much; and we are not disappointed. Howell's thick volume of upwards of five hundred pages is full of observation, and is as amusing as the essays of Montaigne. His letters are addressed to all sorts of people—to the King, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Lady Digby, Secretary Conway, Sir Robert Mansell, Sir Sacvil Trevor, Captain Francis Bacon, Mr. Ben Jonson, Mr. Ed. Noy, and others. We are inclined to think that, with the method of a tradesman, he kept copies of all his letters; for, although some assert that he compiled them from memory when in the Fleet, they are often too full of amusing trivialities, of local touch and colouring, the most evanescent of qualities—in short, have too great an air of freshness to have originated in any other manner. They are, as we have before hinted, supposed to be the earliest specimens of epistolary literature in our language. Howell's

style seems to have been based upon the precept contained in his motto:—

> *Ut* clavis portam, *sic pandit* Epistola pectus;
> Claudetur hæc cera, claudetur illa sera.
>
> As *keys* do open chests,
> So *Letters* open breasts.

He dedicates his letters to the King in a "Poem Royal," dated *Calendis Januarii*, 1641, which contains some strong and excellent lines. He brings, he says:—

> No medals or rich stuff of Tyrian dye,
> *No costly bowls of frosted argentry*,
> No Roman perfumes, buffs, or cordovans
> Made drunk with amber by Moreno's hands.
> . . . but something I will bring
> To handsel the *new year* to CHARLES, my KING,
> And usher in bifronted *Janus*,—

in a word, his book of letters. In his very first page he defines what an epistle should be, in one written to Sir J. S. (John Smith) at Leeds Castle:—

"It was a quaint difference the ancients did put 'twixt a *letter* and an *oration*—that the one should be attir'd like a woman, the other like a man; the latter of the two is allowed large side-robes, as long periods, parentheses, similes, examples, and other parts of rhetorical flourishes; but a letter or epistle should be short-coated and closely-couch'd; a hungerlin [a short scanty coat] becomes a *letter* more handsomely than a gown. Indeed, we should write as we speak; and that's a true familiar letter which expresseth one's mind, as if he were discoursing with the party

to whom he writes in short and succinct terms. The *tongue* and the *pen* are both interpreters of the mind; but I hold the pen to be the more faithful of the two. The tongue, *in udo posita*, being seated in a moist slippery place, may fail and falter in her sudden extemporal expressions; but the pen, having the greater advantage of premeditation, is not so subject to error. Now, letters, though they be capable of any subject, are commonly either *narratory*, *objurgatory*, *monitory*, or *congratulatory*. There are some who, in lieu of letters, write *Homelies;* they preach when they should epistolize. There are others that turn them into tedious *tractats;* and others that must go fraighted with *meer Bartholomew ware*, with trite and trivial phrases only, lifted with pedantic shreds of schoolboy verses."

Really, Mr. Howell must have been reading, by prophetic vision, some of the vacation and lady-tourists' letters which are now-a-days issued. He is equally severe on the elder Balzac and the letter-writers of our "transmarine" neighbours: "Loose flesh without sinews, simpering lank hectic expressions, a bombast of words made up of finical and affected compliments, I cannot away with such sleazy stuff;" and luckily he has backbone enough to prevent his committing the faults which he so ardently condemns. In an early epistle to his father he tells us that, had he remained steward of the glass-house in Broad Street, he should "have melted away to nothing amidst those hot Venetians." Captain Francis Bacon succeeded him in Broad Street, whilst Howell was taken into the

employment of Sir Robert Mansell, who, with "my Lord of Pembrook and divers others of the Prime Lords of the Court, had got a sole patent for the making of glass from pit-coal, only to save the huge loads of wood formerly used in the furnaces." Here is the first hint of the improvement in the blast of our furnaces; but it would seem that the patent did not succeed. In the same letter he tells us something of the rise of the haughty Buckingham:—

"The new favorit Sir *George Villiers* tapers up a pace, and grows strong at Court. His predecessor, the Earl of Somerset, has got a lease of ninety years for his life, and so hath his *Articulate* lady; so called, because she articulated against the frigidity and impotence of her former lord. [This was the notorious Countess of Somerset celebrated in our State Trials.] She was afraid that Coke, the Lord Chief Justice, who had used extraordinary art and industry in discovering all the circumstances in the poysoning of *Overbury*, would have made white *broth* of them; but the *Prerogative* kept them from the *pot*. Yet the subservient instruments, the lesser flies, could not break thorow; amongst others, Mistriss *Turner*, the inventress of *yellow starch*, was executed in a cobweb lawn ruff of that colour at *Tyburn*, and with her, I believe, will disappear that yellow starch, which so much disfigured our nation and rendered them so ridiculous and fantastic."

In the same letter Howell tells us of the execution of Sir Gervas Elway, Lieutenant of the Tower, who, on being hanged on Tower Hill as an accessory to the murder of Overbury, declared that the reason he suffered was through

a rash vow, for when in the Low Countries he swore an oath that he would not play above a certain sum. If he did, *might he be hanged!* and hanged he was, surely enough. In chronicling a crime let us, when we can, append a virtue to it—that, for instance, of Lord William Pembrook, to whom the King gave all Sir Gervas Elway's estate (above a thousand per annum), and who at once bestowed it on the widow and her children. In a letter to Sir James Crofts, Howell tells us of the probable fate of Sir Walter Raleigh, who had just returned from "his myne in Guiana, which at first promised to be a hopeful *boon* voyage" (it is worth while remarking that we now use the last adjective with only one noun, i.e., companion), "but," adds the writer, "it seems that that golden myne is proved a meer *chymœra*, an imaginary airy myne; indeed, His Majesty had never any other conceit of it." Howell wonders why Sir Walter ever came back to the clutches of his enemy, and tells an *à propos* story of a king and his jester. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, is introduced in a wonderfully characteristic huffling, braggadocio way:—

"*Count Gondamar* desired audience with His Majesty —he had but one word to tell him. His Majesty wondering what might be delivered in one word, when he came before him, he said only *Pyrats, Pyrats, Pyrats*, and so departed."

This Gondomar seems, like the Count von Bismarck, to have been a man of some humour. There is in Kirby Street, Hatton Garden, a public-house which retains the name of the "Hole in the Wall;" and to antiquaries the

memory of Lady Hatton is preserved in the street called Hatton Garden, close by. This proud lady, the wife of Sir Edward Coke, had thereat a wicket gate, which led from the garden into the fields beyond, leading to the village of Clerkenwell, its green and may-pole. Count Gondomar, who lived next door to Lady Hatton at Ely House, begged for a key to this private door, which the lady refused. "She," says Howell, "put him off with a compliment;" whereupon Gondomar, in a private audience with the King, exposed the whole affair, and more than hinted at the tyranny exercised by Lady Hatton on her cringing husband. "Lady Hatton," says he, "is a strange lady, for she will not suffer her husband, Sir Edward Coke, to come into her house at her front door, nor him, Gondomar, to go out in the fields at her back door; and so related the whole business." The smoke and dinginess of London, and the sickly glare of the sun therein as compared to Spain, are well hit off in a sentence by the witty Spaniard:—

"He was despatching a Post lately to *Spain*, and the Post having received his packet, and kiss'd his hands, he call'd him back and told him he had forgot one thing, which was, that when he came to *Spain, he should commend him to the sun, for he had not seen him a great while, and in Spain he should be sure to find him.*"

Travelling to the Hague, Amsterdam, and Paris, Howell draws a picture of the latter which shows how little removed it was from a city of the middle ages. Its streets were close, mean, and dirty, except some few

new houses built of stone, and the Louvre, with its great gallery, wherein "the king might place 3,000 men in the very heart of this great mutinous city." The streets stank like those of Cologne, in Coleridge's epigram, and were so narrow that two coaches or carts passing would create a block. The mud was so black and greasy (filled with *oyl*, says Howell) that no washing could cleanse it from some colours; so that an ill name, he says, is like the *crot* of Paris, indelible. The stench of Paris might be perceived with the wind in one's face many miles off. At night-time the city was full of thieves; by which the lives of night travellers were constantly endangered:—

"Coming late to our lodgings (near the Bastille) a crew of *Filous* or night rogues surpriz'd and drew on us, and we exchanged some blows. It pleased God that the *Chevalier du Guet* (a night patrol) came by and so rescued us; but *Jack White* was hurt, and I had two thrusts in my cloake. There's never a night passes by but some robbery or murder is committed in this town."

In a subsequent letter Howell relates the assassination of King Henry IV. by Ravaillac, and the horrid tortures to which that wretch was put.

It is Henry, says Howell, who amassed a heap of gold as high as a lance, and who levied a huge army of 40,000 men, "whence comes the saying, the King of France *with forty thousand men.*" Of course, Howell did not see the murder of the king, but he relates it circumstantially and minutely, as from the lips of an eye-witness, a French friend of his.

"Going to the *Bastile* to see his treasure and ammunition, his coach stopped suddenly, by reason of some colliers and other carts that were in that street; whereupon one *Ravillac*, a lay Jesuit (who had a whole twelvemonth watched an opportunity to do the act), put his foot boldly upon one of the wheels of the coach, and with a long knife stretched himself over their shoulders who were in the boot of the coach, and reached the king at the end, and stabb'd him right in the left side to the heart, and, pulling out the fatal steel, he doubl'd his thrust. The king, with a ruthful voice, cri'd '*Je suis blessé*' (I am hurt), and suddenly the Blood issued out of his mouth: the Regicide villain was apprehended, and command given that no violence should be offered him, that he might be reserved for the Law and some exquisite Torture. The Queen grew half distracted here upon, who had been crown'd *Queen of France* the day before in great triumph; but a few days after she had something to countervail, if not overmatch, her sorrow; for, according to St. Lewis's law, she was made *Queen* Regent of *France* during the king's minority, who was then but about ten years of age. Many consultations were held how to punish *Ravillac*, and there were some Italian physicians that undertook to prescribe a torment that should last a constant torment for three days; but he 'scaped only with this. His body was pull'd between four horses, that one might hear his bones crack, and after dislocation they were set again, and so he was carried in a cart half naked, with a torch in that hand which had committed the murder, and in the place where

the act was done it was cut off, and a Gauntlet of hot Oyl was clapped on the place to staunch the blood, whereat he gave a doleful shriek; then was he brought upon a stage, when a new pair of boots was provided for him, half filled with boyling Oyl, then his Body was pincered, and hot Oyl poured into the holes. In all the extremity of this torture he scarce shewed any sense of pain but when the gauntlet was clap'd upon his arm to staunch the flux, at which time of reaking blood he gave a shrike only. He bore up against all these Torments for about three hours before he died. All the confession that could be drawn from him was, *That he thought to have done God good Service, to take away that king which would have embroiled all Chrestendom in an endless War.*"

Arrived at Venice, he found there "the best gentlemen workmen that ever blew crystal," and was aided, in his attempt to get some of these gentlemen workmen to England, by Sir Henry Wotton, the English ambassador and the author of two famous *mots*. The first was a retort to a Venetian nobleman, who had asked him "where the Protestant religion was before the Reformation." "Signor," said he, "where was your face this morning before it was washed?" The second is the celebrated definition of an ambassador—"A gentleman sent to *lie* abroad for the good of his country." Howell praises Venice glass exceedingly. The makers thereof were gentlemen *ipso facto*, and, after their work, dressed in silks and buckled on their swords like the gallants painted by Vandyke; but the lasses and glasses of Venice,

Howell says, were alike brittle. Venice, he adds, was so clean that it might be walked "in a Silk Stokin and Sattin Slippers;" and with these and other of his observations he mingles story, history, and philosophical remark in a very charming way.

Howell, when in London, appears to have lived very close to Ben Jonson, in Westminster, near Tothill Fields; for, from the pleasant gardens there, we find him in July, 1629, sending to Sir Arthur Ingram "a hamper of melons, the best that I could anywhere find of Tothill Fields gardens." Sir Arthur had asked Howell to stay some time with him at his noble new house at Temple Newsam. In thanking him for this courteous invitation our familiar-letter writer anticipates Joe Miller in one of his very sound old jests, which he sets down to a Norfolk countryman who had a "sute" before Sir Edward Coke, who, asking him how he called a certain river, answered, "My lord, I need not call her, for she is forward enough to come of herself." "So I may say that you need not call me to any house of yours, for I am forward enough to come without calling." In the next extract, a letter which we give whole to show fully Howell's style, we learn that Ben Jonson narrowly escaped being burnt out of house and home. In it he addresses rare Ben, as did many of his contemporaries, as his poetical sire.

"*To my Father* Mr. Ben Jonson.

"Father *Ben,—Nullum sit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ*, there's no great wit without some mix-

ture of madness, so saith the philosopher; nor was he a fool that answered, *nec parvum sine mixtura stultitiæ*, nor small wit without some allay of foolishness. Touching the first, it is verified in you, for I find that you have bin often mad when you writ your *Fox*, and madder when you writ your *Alchemist;* you were mad when you writ your *Catilin*, and stark mad when you writ *Sejanus;* but when you writ your *Epigrams* and the *Manetick Lady* you were not so mad: insomuch that I perceive there are degrees of madness in you. Excuse me that I am so free with you. The madness I mean is that divine Fury, that heating and heightening spirit which *Ovid* speaks of.

"*Est deus in nobis, agitante calesscimus illo:* that true enthusiasm which transports and elevates the souls of poets above the middle region of vulgar conceptions, and makes them soar up to heaven and touch the stars with their laurelled heads, to walk in the *Zodiac* with *Apollo* himself, and command *Mercury* upon their errand.

"I cannot yet light upon *Dr. Davies* his *Welsh* Grammar; before Christmas I am promised one. So, desiring you to look better hereafter to your charcoal fire and chimney, which I am glad to be one that preserved it from burning, this being the second time that Vulcan has threatened you—it may be because you have spoken ill of his wife, and been too busy with his horns—I rest, *Your son and contiguous neighbour, J. H.*

"Westminster, 27 June, 1629."

We have little space left; but it is hard to part with a pudding from which so many plums may be picked.

Howell has always plenty to say. He will tell you a facetious tale of a "Porter," or an anecdote about the "Election of Pope," or will discourse on the "Chemistry of Glass," "The Excise," "Prayer and Praise," "Autology," "Of a hideous serpent lately found in a young gentleman's heart in Holborn," "Of Wiving," "Of Peter Van Heyn's mighty Plate Prize," "Of what befel Walstein [Wallenstein] in Germany last year:" "All sorts of Stories." He writes of William Lily, the astrologer, of the death of Mr. Attorney-General Noy, of that of Lord Bacon, and several times to his poetic or mental father, Ben Jonson, "dear father Ben," who was of a rugged but fine nature, and too often

> —— At the Sun,
> The Dogge or triple Tun—

as full of drink as of the poetic afflatus. We cannot pass without extracting Howell's epitaph on Jonson, and part of his letter to the Lord Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Duppa, on Ben's death. "My Lord," he writes, "It is well becoming and very worthy that you are about not to suffer Mr. *Ben Jonson* to go so silently to his grave or rot so suddenly. Being newly come to town, and understanding that your *Johnsonus Virbius* was in the press, upon the solicitation of Sir *Thomas Hawkins*, I suddenly fell upon the insuing *Decastich*, which, if your Lordship please, may have room among the rest.

Upon my honoured Friend and F., Mr. *Ben Jonson.*

> AND is thy glass run out, is that oyl spent
> Which light to such strong sinewy labours lent?

Well, *Ben*, I now perceive that all the *Nine*,
Though they their utmost forces should combine,
Cannot prevail 'gainst *Night's three daughters*, but
One still must *Spin*, one *Wind*, the other *Cut*.
Yet, in despight of *distaffe*, clue and *knife*,
Thou in thy strenuous lines hast got a life,
Which like thy *Bays* shall flourish ev'ry age,
While *Soc* or *Buskin* shall attend the stage.
Sic Vaticinatur Hoellus."

He writes a long letter on the death of the King, and tells us that the city was much "annoyed at the Court buying the mourning all in white cloth, and having it dyed black." This was a shrewd stroke of business, owing, we should guess, to the citizens having, on the proximate death of the Sovereign, bought up all the black cloth, so as to monopolize it, and charge their own price.

Howell always writes well, and perhaps never better than when he gives an account of his daily life. In his index he calls this narration the "Self-travel of one of the Wayes that lead us to Heaven."

"Though there be rules and rubrics in our Liturgy sufficient to guide us in the performance of all holy duties, yet I believe every one hath some mode, or model, or formulary of his own especially for his private or cubicular devotions; for myself, on Saturday evening I fast, on which I have fasted ever since I was a youth, for being delivered from a very great danger. On Sunday morning I rise earlier, to prepare myself for the sanctifying of it; nor do I use barber, taylor, shoe-maker, or any other mechanic that morning. Whatever lets may hinder me

the week before, I never miss, but in case of sickness, to repair to God's house that day before prayers begin, and to prepare myself by previous meditation to take the whole service with me. I prostrate myself in the humblest and decentest way of genuflexion I can imagine; nor do I believe there can be any excess of exterior humility in that place, therefore I do not like unseemly squatting, bold postures on one's tail, or *muffling one's face with one's hat*, but with bended knee I fix my eyes on the East part of the church and on Heaven. . . . I endeavour to apply every tittle of the service to myself, to the service of my own conscience; and I believe the want of this, with the huddling and careless reading of some ministers, make many undervalue and take a surfeit (i. e. at the length) of our public service. For the reading and singing of Psalms, whereas most of them are either petitions or Eucharistical ejaculations, I listen to them more attentively and make them my own: when I stand at the *Creed*, I think upon the custom they have in Poland, and elsewhere, for *gentlemen* to draw their swords all the while, intimating thereby they will defend it with their lives and blood: and for the Decalogue, where others rise, I even kneel in the humblest and trembling'st posture of all, craving remission for the breaches of God's holy commandments. I love a holy and devout sermon, that first checks and then chears the conscience, that begins with the law and ends with the Gospel, but I never prejudicate or judge any preacher, taking him as I find him.

"And now that we are not only *adulted but ancient*

Christians, I believe the most acceptable sacrifice we can send up to Heaven is *Prayer* and *Praise,* and that *Sermons* are not so essential as either of them to the true practice of devotion. The rest of the holy sabbath, I sequester my body and my mind as much as I can from worldly affairs.

"Upon Monday morn I have a particular prayer of thanks; and every day I knock thrice at Heaven's gate, besides prayers at meals, and other occasional ejaculations, as upon the *putting on of a clean shirt, washing my hands,* and lighting the candles. Upon Wednesday night I fast and perform some extraordinary acts of devotion, as also upon Friday night, and on Saturday morn when, as soon as my senses are unlocked, I am up. And in the summer time I am often up abroad, in some private field, there to attend the rising of the sun; and as I pray thrice a day, so I fast thrice a week. Before I go to bed I make a scrutiny of what peccant humours have reigned in me that day, and strike a tally in Heaven's Exchequer for my *quietus est,* ere I close my eyes, and so leave no burden on my conscience. I use not to rush madly into prayer. . . . . Difference in opinion may work a disaffection in me, not a detestation. I rather pity than hate a Turk or an Infidel, for they are of the same metal, and bear the same stamp as I do, though the inscriptions differ. If I hate any, it is those schismatics that puzzle the sweet peace of our Church. I thank God that I have this fruit of my foreign travels, that I can pray unto him every day in the week in a several language, and upon

Sunday in seven, which in orisons of my own I punctually perform in my private Pomeridian devotions:—

Et sic æternam contendo attingere vitam."

Few men will quarrel with such a method of doing God service, which is surely a peaceful and Christian one. Serious and calm writing like this strongly reminds us of the best passages in Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici."

The letter just quoted is dated July, 1635. It resembles Sir Thomas Browne's style so much that one may doubt whether Howell had not seen the MS. of the "Religio Medici," which in that year was written, or, it may be, was written before and circulated in manuscript. It was not given to the world until 1642. Dr. Johnson says, "About the year 1634, he (Sir Thomas Browne) is supposed to have returned to London, and the next year to have written his celebrated treatise called 'Religio Medici,' the religion of a physician, which he declares himself never to have intended for the press. Dr. Kippis, says Simon Wilkin in a note on this passage, seems to have proved that 'Religio Medici' was written in 1635. In Wilkin's additional memoir of Browne we are told that he returned to England after having obtained his degree of M.D. at Leyden, in 1633. He then returned at once to England, and settled as a physician at Shepden Hall, near Halifax, where he had enforced leisure enough to meditate upon his past life and to write the 'Religio Me-

dici,' one of the fairest monuments of the English mind." If this were so, and in 1634 the MS. was in circulation amongst literary people, it is possible Howell, the friend of Ben Jonson, looked at it and, intentionally or unintentionally, reproduced its style.

MICHAEL SCOT.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Debrio. Disquisitiones Magicæ, Proloquium. Moguntiæ, 1612.

Bayle. Dictionnaire historique et critique, revu par Prosp. Marchand. Rotterdam, 1720.

Scot, Michael. Liber physiognomiæ. Opuscula. Lyons, 1531.

Scott, Sir Walter. Lay of the Last Minstrel (Notes to).

Dante. Tutte le Opere di Dante, con varie annot. e copiosi rami, &c. dal Conte Don Christ. Zapata de Cisneros. In Venetia, 1757.

Dante. Translated by Henry Cary.

MICHAEL SCOT.

AMONGST those who have obtained a very great fame upon an unsolid foundation," says a modern writer, "Michael Scot holds a very distinguished place." Hallam, who appears to have read everything, and to have neglected nothing, has very little about him, and that little is unsatisfactory, to his friends at least. It is contained in a note in Hallam's first volume, and here it is: "Michael Scot, 'the Wizard of dreaded fame,' pretended to translate Aristotle, but is charged with having appropriated the labours of one Andrew, a Jew, as his own." Scot's fame was, therefore, purchased at little expense, for his singular learning in Greek, or rather the reputation of it, imposed upon many people.

We have seen, in the article on Faustus, that Coleridge had intended to write a drama upon Michael Scot after the manner of "Faust." It is well that he did not carry out his determination with so knavish a hero, for even biographers of his own country can scarcely keep their

hands from belabouring him, and, groping in the darkness of mediæval literature, are evidently enraged to find that the heroic figure described by Sir Walter, the great magician and learned man to whom even Lord Eldon was proud to trace his ancestry,* is a mere windbag, a charlatan, a fellow of vast pretensions, possessed of the slenderest basis of support, the smallest nucleus of reality, round which is wound the biggest possible ball of hypothesis, conjecture, and fable.

The celebrated and poetical character who grew up to be regarded as

> A wizard of such dreaded fame,
> That when in Salamanca's cave
> Him listed his magic wand to wave,
> The bells would ring in Nôtre-Dame,

was born in an era particularly well adapted for the growth

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* "When the late Lord Eldon was elevated to the peerage, the arms of the Scots of Balwearie were added to his own; and we are told that the Lord Chancellor felt a pride in his descent from the renowned Scottish magician. As nothing but modern evidence is produced in support of this connection of Michael with any family now in existence, we may be allowed to withhold belief from this story. The members of ancient families are always willing to connect their pedigree with some man of intelligence in past times. . . If Michael had been a poor philosopher living in Lord Eldon's own day, the prudent Chancellor would have taken particularly good care not to have given him a sixpence to buy bread with; but the son of the Newcastle coal merchant was willing enough to attest the antiquity of his own extraction by counting kin with a celebrated man of the thirteenth century."—*Lives of Eminent Men of Fife.*

of an empiric fame. Michael the Scotsman, Scotus, is certainly claimed as a Scotsman, and is inserted amongst the celebrated men of Fife by Mr. James Bruce, who does not seem very well pleased with him for being a Scotsman at all. But he is also claimed as an Englishman. Leland asserts that he was English, and Ball and Pitts, who both quote Leland, and cannot therefore be taken as authorities, assert the same thing. They also, says Mr. Bruce, indignantly claim "Duns Scotus as an Englishman;" and, indeed, there is better authority for Anglicising Duns than Michael. We take it, however, that the primary and very heavy proof that Duns and Michael were both Scots is that they were called so. When Leland quotes a passage from an unpublished treatise of Bacon, wherein the names of "*Gerardus Cremonensis, Michael Scotius, Aluredus Anglicanus, Hermannus Alemannus*" occur, we feel that there is no reason to disturb the distinctive titles given to each. Let Hermann be a German and Michael a Scotsman by all means, even though Leland does say that the magician was born and educated in the county of Durham. What does it matter?

At Balwearie, in the close neighbourhood of Raith, now in the parish of Abboteshall, Michael was born in 1214—so many authorities tell us; but as, in 1230, Roger Bacon says that certain portions of Aristotle's writings (*librorum Aristotelis partes aliquas de naturalibus et mathematicis*) had become known through the translation of Michael Scot, it seems evident that his birth should

be placed earlier, perhaps as far back as 1200 or 1190. He flourished as the astrologer to the Emperor Frederic II. in 1233, and was contemporary with our Henry III, Louis VIII. of France, and Alexander II. of Scotland, and it is firstly to his (?) translation of Aristotle and the fame acquired thereby that he owed his elevation to the service of Frederic, and secondly to his astrological predictions that he owes his present fame and enduring celebrity.

Of a roving and curious disposition, the son of a poor Scottish knight, Scot crossed the border and resided for some time at Oxford, to perfect himself in the learning of the day. He went to Paris and studied there, and after some time made his appearance at Padua, where he lectured on astrology. He seems to have been born a favourite of literary men, and to have been accepted in that learned city, not as a mere pupil in, but as a master of, the art of magic. Boccaccio introduced his name to his thousands of readers, and calls him a great master of necromancy; and when once thus placed, it is evident that his fame was made. In the eighth day, and the ninth novel of the "Decameron," there is an amusing story of two painters, Messires Bruno and Buffalmacco, who, under the pretext of introducing one Master Simon, a physician, into a gay society, throw him into a cesspool, where they leave him to get out as he best can. It is in speaking to Master Simon of the society which they frequent, of course a fictitious one, that the painters introduce the name Michael. "After having sworn the physician to secrecy, 'You must know,' continued Bruno, 'that twelve

or thirteen years ago there arrived in this town a famous necromancer called Michael Scot, because he was from Scotland, (the French translator prints it Michael Lescot).* He was received with very great honours and distinction by the best known gentlemen of Florence, who now are almost all dead. And when he left this place, he left also at their solicitation two of his disciples, whom he commanded to render to those gentlemen, who had so well received him, all those services which depended upon them and their art. These two necromancers served the said nobles, not only in their affairs of gallantry, but also in other things, and became so accustomed to the climate, that they determined to fix their residence here. They bound themselves by ties of friendship to several persons of character and personal merit, without inquiring whether they were noble or *roturiers*, poor or rich, and these out of regard for their two friends, formed a little society, of about five and twenty men, who assemble together twice a month in a place they themselves have previously named." '†

One needs not to say, since the story is by Boccaccio, that the Society meets for the most immoral purpose. Courtesans of the greatest beauty and of the highest rank are there to enjoy these gay feasts with them; indeed the

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* "Egli non ha ancora guari, che in questa città fu un gran maestro in negromanzia, il quale ebbe nome Michele Scotto, perciò che di Scozia era."—BOCCACCIO, *Dec. Giorn.* viii. *Nov.* IX.

† BOCCACCIO, *Decameron, Giorn. Ottava, Novella* IX.

magic of the necromancers summoned these from the most distant parts of the earth. If the persons were two thousand leagues off, the potent magic taught by Michael Scot could compel them to come in two minutes. Bruno gives to these grand ladies some grand names. "There is," he tells the simple physician, who is in the end rightly punished for his wicked desires, "the Lady of Barbanico, the Queen of Basque, the wife of the Sultan, the Empress of Osbeck, the Schinchimurro of Prester-John, the Chian-Chianfère of Norway, the Semistance of Berlinson, and the Scalpèdre of Narsia." But Bruno was highly favoured as well as his friend, the favourite mistress of the first being the Queen of England, while Buffalmacco possessed the favours of the Queen of France.

It will be useless to follow this tale to its catastrophe, which is in the usual style of Boccaccio. The story was written about one hundred years after our hero had been in Florence, and shows that his fame as a magician survived. Scot was, however, the hero not only of the jovial tale but the mystic romance, so much so, that Dante thought fit to introduce him in the Inferno, canto xx.

> Quell' altro che ne' fianchi e cosi poco
> Michele Scotto fu, che veramente
> Delle magiche frodo seppe il giucco.

This portrait of him, very vividly rendered by Cary, is extremely Dantesque. We see the man, thin and girt round the loins, broad in his shoulders for his size, but weird and wild looking and small in his flanks. There is, it is said, a portrait of him, on vellum, amongst the Ca-

nonici MSS. in the Bodleian, and this agrees with Dante's vigorous lines. The poet has placed the necromancer in the eighth circle with others because they had presumed to practise divination and astrology. Upon Dante inquiring who the spirits were, they are thus introduced by his guide:—

> That spirit, from whose cheek
> The beard sweeps o'er his shoulders brown, what time
> Græcia was emptied of her males, that scarce
> The cradles were supplied, the seer was he
> In Aulis, who, with Calchas, gave the sign
> When first to cut the cable. Him they named
> Eurypilus: so sings my magic strain,
> In which majestic measure well thou knowest,
> Who know'st it all. *That other round the loins*
> *So slender of his shape, was Michael Scot,*
> *Practis'd in every sleight of magic will.*

Slender, short, dark-haired, and weird in look, Michael might well pass for a wizard. We are told, in certain Macaronic verses, published in 1519, that he was wonderfully clever in philtres and sorceries that could secure the love of women. He could also "call devils from the vasty deep," ride on an enchanted horse, wrap his small figure round in an invisible cloak, sail in a ship without rudder, sails, or other motive power but that with which he supplied it, and walk about, like Peter Schlimmel, without the inconvenience or convenience of a shadow.

"He has been placed," says Bayle, in his article Scotus, "in the catalogue of magicians, and we are told that he frequently invited several people to dine with him without providing anything for them; but when his

guests sat down to table he forced the spirits to bring him meat from all parts; and when it was come he told the company, 'Gentlemen, this comes from the kitchen of the King of France, and this from the kitchen of the King of Spain; this comes from England,' &c. The poet Dante adopted the common error." Here Bayle quotes the lines I have given, and adds that "John Bacon, an English Carmelite and the Prince of the Averroists, is more to be credited; he quotes *Michael Scotus* as a great divine. Pitseus, who commends him very much, is also a more credible author. This Pitseus is the Pitts who claims Scot as an Englishman, and who says, that, though Michael was accounted a magician by the mob and the ignorant people, wise men passed another judgment on him.* "However," concludes Bayle, in his very short notice, "'tis said that this pretended magician foresaw that he should die, and foretold the place where the Emperor Frederic should lose his life."

But it was, after all, not by magic but by astrology that Michael foretold the death of his patron. Probably, in reference to this circumstance, and certainly to the science of astrology, our good Martin Luther once gave the following opinion, which is so sound and wise that modern science can add nothing to it, and which should, at least with all Lutherans, have set at rest any belief in astrology.

In the year 1538, the Seigneur Von Minckwitz made

* Prudentum tamen et cordatorum hominum longe aliud fuit judicium.

a public oration in honour of astrology, wherein he sought to prove that the sentence in Jeremiah, chap. x, "Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven," applied not to astrology, but to the images of the Gentiles. Luther said hereupon, "These passages may be quibbled with, but not overthrown. Jeremiah speaks, as Moses did, of all the signs of heaven, earth, and sea; the heathen were not so silly as to be afraid of the sun or moon, but they feared and adored prodigies and miraculous signs. Astrology is no art; it has no principle, no demonstration whereupon we may take sure footing; 'tis all haphazard work. Philip Melancthon, against his will, admits unto me, that though, as he says, the art is extant, there are none that understand it rightly. They set forth, in their almanacs, that we shall have no snow in summer time, no thunder in winter; and this the country clowns know as well as the astrologers.

"Philip Melancthon says: 'That such people as are born in ascendente Librâ, in the ascension of Liber, towards the south, are unfortunate people.' Whereupon I said, 'The astrologers are silly creatures, to dream that their crosses and mishaps proceed not from God, but from the stars; 'tis hence they are not patient in their troubles and adversities.'

"Astrology is uncertain, and as the predicamenta are feigned words in dialectica, even so astronomy has feigned astrology; as the ancient and true divines knew nothing of the fantasies and divinity of the school-teachers, so the ancient astronomers knew nothing of

astrology. The nativities of Cicero and of others were shown me. I said, 'I hold nothing thereof, nor attribute anything unto them. I would gladly have the astrologers answer me this: Esau and Jacob were born together, of one father and one mother, at one time, and under equal planets, yet they were wholly of contrary natures, kinds, and minds.'

"What is done by God ought not to be ascribed to the stars. The upright and true Christian religion opposes and confutes all such fables. The way of casting nativities is like the proceedings in Popedom, whose outward ceremonies and pompous ordinances are pleasing to human wit and wisdom, as the consecrated water, torches, organs, cymbals, singing, ringing, but withal there's no certain knowledge.

"An astrologer or horoscope-monger is like one that sells dice and balls. 'Behold, here I have dice that always come up to 12.' If once or twice their conjectures tell, they cannot sufficiently extol the art; but as to the infinite cases where they fail, they are altogether silent.

"Astronomy, on the contrary, I like; it pleases me by reason of her (*sic*) manifold benefits.

"General prophecies and declarations which declare generally what in future shall happen, accord not upon individuals and particular things.

"When, at one time, many are slain in battle, no man can affirm that they are born under one planet, yet they die altogether in one hour, yea in one moment."*

* Luther, *Colloquia Mensalia.*

These two points, of the many slain in battle, and of the birth of Esau and Jacob, would, no doubt, be easily met by modern astrologers, let us say Lieutenant Morrison, but they are, in fact, irrefragable. However, in Scot's time there were many who believed in the false science, if he himself did not. The story of his feasting his friends from the tables of the various kings of Europe may have been the foundation of the more wonderful story of producing queens and beautiful ladies from the same places, as Boccaccio tells us, for the position of England and France are in both stories about the same. But Scot certainly gave vent to various prophecies which came true, or, like those of Nostradamus, were twisted into something like their realization. Thus Villain tells us that "Master Michael Scot" said of Padua, a long time before it happened, "*Paduæ magnatum plerabunt filii necem diram et horrendam, datam catuloque Veronam.*" "The sons of Padua will weep the dire and horrid slaughter of her nobles, and Verona will be given to the dog," which was, of course, fulfilled when El Can Grande, the great dog, entered Verona.

With the pretended prediction of the death of his patron Frederic, a man—as it is more than probable Michael was himself—given to licentious pleasures, the list of the wizard's prophecies may be closed. It will be noticed by the reader that all these pretended prophetic utterances are of the same family, capable of the widest interpretation, and, if they do not prove true at one time, are warranted to keep fresh for a few years; or if the

place be mentioned whereat a death is to take place, we find names are suddenly changed to suit the occurrence. Thus Michael Scot is said to have predicted that his patron should die at the iron gates in Florence, whereon the Emperor resolved to enter that town. But according to Francisco Pepino the prophecy came true in this way. "In the last day, therefore, of his life, when he was sick at Samnio, in a town the name of which was Florentinum, a bed was made for him in a chamber beside the walls of the tower, which the head of the bed touched. The gate of the town in the wall was built up, but the iron posts remained within. The Emperor caused the tower to be examined to see what it was like inside. It was told him that in that part of the wall where he lay there was a gate with iron posts shut up. Hearing this, he began to meditate and said, 'This is the place of my decease already foretold to me. Here shall I die. God's will be done.'"*

The story, according to Muratori, has the appearance of a lie, told probably of Frederic because he never did enter Florence. The prediction is after all one made by a paltering fiend, taking it at its best, and allowing both it and its fulfilment to be true. A prophecy which is twisted into a true solution in that manner is worth very little to any one.

It is curious that a similar story is told of one of our kings, Henry IV, and that it has been used with admirable

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* *Chron. F. Francisci Pipini*, cap. xl; apud Muratori, quoted also by Mr. James Bruce.

effect by Shakespeare. King Henry, historians tell us, was praying before the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, when he was seized with a fit. His attendants carried him to the apartments of the abbot, and he lay down to die in the Jerusalem chamber, the name of which is said to have recalled an old prophecy, with the notion that he had once entertained that he should make an attempt for the recovery of the holy city. It is probable that the visit of Michael Paleologus to France and England, to beg aid of the western monarchs against Bajazet and the Turks, may have suggested to the vigorous king the notion of resuscitating the almost forgotten crusades, and that the prophecy was vented to hinder him from the undertaking. Shakespeare, who omits the praying at the shrine, makes Henry swoon when, at his council, after a time he asks :—

KING. Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?
WAR. 'Tis called Jerusalem, my noble Lord.
KING. Laud be to Heaven! even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years,
I should not die but in Jerusalem;
Which vainly I suppos'd the Holy Land:—
But bear me to that chamber, there I'll lie;
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die."*

He did in effect die in the Jerusalem chamber at Westminster Abbey on the 20th March, 1413, in the forty-seventh year of his reign.

* King Henry IV, Part II, Act IV, Scene iv.

To return to Michael Scot. According to traditional history he left the court of the Emperor Frederic before the end of that monarch's reign, and, arriving in England, was hospitably received by Edward I. But chronology would make this twenty years after the death of Frederic, as Edward was crowned in 1271. He then went to Scotland, and was sent to Norway in 1290 to bring over, as one of the ambassadors, the Princess Margaret. On his return to Scotland he took up his residence there, the scenes of his magic feats being partly in Ettrick and in Roxburghshire. One version of the manner of his death is that it took place while he was engaged in devotional exercises; but Sir Walter tells a different story, and one that might have suggested to Tennyson his very beautiful and exquisitely pictured scene between Vivien and Merlin. "His wife or concubine elicited from him a secret, that his art could warn off any danger except the poisonous qualities of broth made of the flesh of a *breme* sow. Such a mess was accordingly administered to the wizard, who died in consequence of eating it; surviving, however, long enough to put to death his treacherous confidante."

He was buried, some people say, at Melrose, where it suits Sir Walter to place his grave, others assert that the wizard rests at Home Coltrame, in Cumberland. The belief in his magic continued long; so late as the year 1614, when George Sempill, minister of Killelau, was tried before the Presbytery of Glasgow, for practising magic, it was brought forward as evidence against the unhappy man, and deposed to by one John Huchesoun, one of the bail-

lies of Paisley, that he had seen George Sempill buy an Albertus Magnus, and that he had in his possession and frequently read a book of unlawful arts by Michael Scot. It may be, indeed, that this book was the cause of Sempill's prosecution.

Besides the fame recently acquired by Michael in consequence of Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," the wizard was again called into prominent notice by a romance by Allan Cunninghame, bearing his name, "Michael Scot;" the romance is, however, now forgotten. Coleridge, as we have seen in the article on Faustus, contemplated a drama, of which Scot was to be the hero, and numberless chap-books and children's story-books have spread the name and fame of the wizard far and wide.

The fame of this man, if taken for what it is worth, is worth but little. His name alone survives; of his learning, the means whereby to determine his position in letters and science, we have little left. Roger Bacon thought very meanly of him; but Leland, Pitts, Dempster, and David Buchanan have, according to Mr. Bruce, "endowed him, as they do every other man of whom they write, with all the accomplishments in the world. 'He ascended,' says Leland, 'to the very summits of theology.' According to David Buchanan, he was particularly eminent as a physician." Mr. Bruce's rebuke of the writers he names applies to many biographers; and it would seem that David Buchanan, simply because Michael was a Scotsman, not only endowed his hero with the skill of curing leprosy, gout, dropsy, and other incurable diseases, but has "heaped

upon Michael the knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldee," while his real acquirements were not merely little Latin and less Greek, but Latin only, with a very imperfect acquaintance with Arabic. Equally with his contemporaries he could know little of Greek. What he did know was "through the unfaithful medium of the Arabians." "The writers," continues Mr. Bruce, "whom he quotes in his principal work are Hippocrates, Galen, and Pamphilus, amongst the ancients, and Constantinus Afer among the moderns. There is not an allusion to a Roman classic in the whole work."

Michael Scot's reputation seems to us a splendid instance of the *omne ignotum pro magnifico*. If we try to read any of his works we soon grow tired with the bold assertions, the groundless surmises, and the nonsense of them. He is great on sneezing, and tells us why a certain number of sneezes made on entering on business is lucky; and that one from any member of the family during the night is good, while two is bad. In rising in the morning one is good, but two bad, &c.* Of dreams, of births, of the height of men, the soles of the feet of women, of a dozen other galimatias, he discourses to his readers; but it is doubtful whether he recounts one fact won by his own observation,† or one wise deduction from the facts of

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* The head of the chapter is as follows:—"Sternuto sternutas, est verbum et significat sternutare; et hæc sternutatio nugus nominis ipse idem est actus et quasi dicitur sternutatio."

† That is, in the book quoted, *Liber Phisionomie Magistri Michaelis Scot*, cited by James Bruce.

others. As a specimen of his deductions he will tell us that a child is born with his head foremost in order that he may see the world, that a boy's first cry is O. A, as if he said, O! Adam, why didst thou sin? While a girl child cries O. E, or O! Eve, why wast thou guilty, through thee I endure a miserable life in this world."

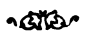
In his *Liber Physionomie*, cap. xiv, Michael discusses a variety of questions which are indicative of his time, just as those discussed by Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Vulgar Errors," tell us exhibit to us fairly his view of such matters in his day. Michael tells us why people love their children more than their children love them; why they love the eldest more than the rest; why they love an only son more than one of several; why a man loves his friend better than a stranger; why a Christian does not love a Saracen; why a man likes a dog better than a cat; and a horse better than an ass; a beast of any kind more than a stone; earth more than water, and fire more than air.

In the second book he solemnly warns us of the danger of meeting or keeping company with a man wanting an eye, or a leg, or an arm, as being unlucky; and he says that there is not a creature which, if it be deprived of a member, does not change its nature into better or worse than ordinary, rarely better, he adds, if it live long.

Shortly, we may conclude with his countryman, Mr. James Bruce, that the fame of Michael Scot is without any real foundation, although "from writers in the present day he has received abundance of eulogiums." "These writers,"

continues Mr. Bruce, "have concluded, in utter ignorance of either his works or his character, that, as in rude ages philosophers and men of true science have been looked upon as magicians, therefore Michael, having been regarded as a magician, must have been a philosopher and a man of science. This is the logic of all the useful knowledge writers of the nineteenth century, and is quite satisfactory to their readers."

LODOWICK MUGGLETON.



BOOKS CONSULTED.

A Remonstrance from the Eternal God; declaring several Spiritual Transactions unto the Parliament and Commonwealth of England, &c, &c. By John Reeve and Lodowick Muggleton. 1651.

The New Witnesses proved Old Heretics. By William Penn, 4to. London, 1672.

A True Representation of the Absurd and Mischievous Principles of the Sect commonly known by the name of Muggletonians. London, 1694.

LODOWICK MUGGLETON.

FONTENELLE in his "Dialogues of the Dead"—a reproduction of a familiar subject which Landor's "Imaginary Conversation" has rendered more familiar still—brings the shade of Montaigne, that instant dismissed from the earth, to meet with that of Socrates, lonely and unaccompanied, in Hades. The gossiping essayist is delighted to see one from whom he has so often quoted, and begs the philosopher to tell him of the grand age in which he lived, and of the great men by whom he was surrounded—of Plato and Phocion, Pericles and Alcibiades, "to whom," says Montaigne, "the men of his own days formed so pitiable a contrast." To which Socrates—in a method by no means Socratic—replies, that Montaigne is altogether mistaken, that the age in which he lived was by no means grand, that people then did not by any means make the fuss over him which they do now, that distance and time, both grand enchanters, had magnified its virtues and

buried its faults; and that, finally, the ages do not degenerate, the world being always about the same compound of fools and wise men.

This, which is not particularly new, is not particularly true. Ages do differ considerably, especially in outward forms, whether the proportion of wise men and fools be about the same or not. We differ so much, for instance, from the age of John Bunyan, Milton, and the more earnest thinkers of their day, that it is quite difficult to realize the men of their stamp. In the comedies of Beaumont and Fletcher, of Jonson, Massinger, and Shakerly Marmion, we find an extinct species of bully, soothsayer, spendthrift, puritan, or swaggerer, as interesting to the student of character as a bone of an icthyosaurus is to Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins. The fact is, that ages do change and characters die out. Perhaps Sam Weller and Becky Sharp may appear as strange to our descendants as do the "Copper Captain" and the "Roaring Girl" to us—in whom we can, indeed, trace scarcely one modern female trait, except that the young lady "dranke tobacco," and that the leaders of fashion imitated her, out of politeness no doubt, when entertained a few years ago on board the Pacha's yacht.

But strangest of all strange characters was the fanatic and Puritanic professor of religion, with whom Butler has made us somewhat familiar. It no doubt suited the cavaliers to represent these people as always hypocrites; but they were, in fact, as thoroughly in earnest as any body of men in the world: and one proof of this is that

they carried the world with them. Everybody joined in the religious cry :—

> The oyster-women lock'd their fish up,
> And trudg'd away to cry no bishop;
> The mousetrap men laid savealls by,
> And 'gainst evil counsellors did cry.
> Some cry'd the Covenant instead
> Of pudding-pies and gingerbread;
> Botchers left old clothes in the lurch,
> And fell to turn and patch the Church.

Carried away and carrying others away as violently as any in this crowd of prophets—as earnest, and at the time more successful than their opponents, George Fox and William Penn—were two obscure men, John Reeve and Lodowick Muggleton, who achieved the honour of becoming the founders of a sect of Christians which has but recently expired, after a duration of two hundred years. As every false prophet must have his first aider and abettor—as Mahomet had his Abubeker, and Joseph Smith his brother Hiram, so John Reeve had his fervent disciple, Lodowick Muggleton, a mad tailor, whom he joined with him in his peculiar ministry, and pronounced to be his "mouth." About the year 1651 these two came prominently before the English people, already disturbed enough by so-called prophets, and for some time favoured the people every year or so with Epistles and Gospels which bear certainly a very distant resemblance to the Apostolic and Evangelic writings. The first of these is entitled: "A REMONSTRANCE from the ETERNAL GOD; declaring

several spiritual transactions unto the PARLIAMENT and *Commonwealth of England*, unto His Excellency the Lord General CROMWELL, the Council of STATE, the Council of WAR, &c. &c. *By* John Reeve *and* Lodowick Muggleton, *the two Last Witnesses and true Prophets imprisoned for the Testimony of* Jesus Christ *in* Old Bridewell."

Mad as have been many of the indwellers of Old Bridewell, it never held a madder pair. It appears that in the year 1651 there were many Richmonds in the field in the shape of prophets. To the first of these, one John Tanee, who had affirmed that there was "no Personal God," John Reeve and his "mouth" went, by virtue of a commission which they had received from the Omnipotent, and with well-chosen and hard texts so puzzled and belaboured him that he was fain to be still. Still they gave him no quarter, declaring that he and the Ranters were "the cursed children of the Dragon-Devil Cain, sporting themselves in all fleshly filthiness, as the people of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* did, that they may justly be damned in themselves in the great day of the Lord. And so much for all ungodly Ranters and John Tanee their king." This is hard measure surely for the despised people called Ranters, of whom it will be remembered John Bunyan, pious and godly, was once one. Ranter—from the Dutch *randen, randien, delilare*, says Richardson—is one who tears a passion to tatters, to very rags, and was at that time almost a new name. Richardson's earliest citations are from Cowley and Bishop Hall's Satires; but certainly we do not hear that the Ranters were by any means a vicious

people. It seems, however, to have been the peculiar province of Reeve and Muggleton to "deal damnation round the land," for the next prophet whom they damned was John Robbins, then in the New Prison; and him they approached for the express purpose of pronouncing a sentence of eternal death against. And here we learn that the word Prophet, used after this time by Milton as meaning a preacher, had assumed a far more important meaning. "For this person," says Reeve, "many people honoured as a God, for they fell on their faces before him at his feet, and called him their Lord and their God; likewise he was pray'd unto, as unto a God. Moreover he gave them a law, commanding them not to mention the name of any other God but him (his) only."

This madman might have been deemed by far too mad to yield to the two "commissionated prophets," as he had not yielded to the magistrates. Yet, after hearing the sentence, he bowed his head saying, "It is finished, the Lord's will be done;" and "so much for John Robbins." After this the two prophets were moved to deliver a general damning warning to all clergymen and ministers, forbidding them to preach unless commissioned by the two. As the Clergymen, Ranters, Shakers, Independents, and Quakers, did not pay the least attention to these warnings, Reeve and Muggleton proceeded to further acts, and were straight "seized, apprehended, and committed to Newgate for our faith, by the Lord Mayor;" upon which they at once damned the Lord Mayor and the "London Jewry" (the Mansion House was then in the Old Jewry), especially

one Alderman Andrews. This occurred on October 15, 1653; and being thus made martyrs, there was a great outpouring of that peculiar grace which made many believe in Reeve and "his Mouth," Muggleton.

Their next production is "A General Epistle from the Holy Spirit," dated from "Great Trinity Lane, at a Chandler's Shop, over against one Mr. Millis, a Brown Baker, near Bow Lane End, London;" and in it they plainly assume to be the two last witnesses spoken of in the Revelation. They were, undoubtedly, well read in the Bible; and, like John Bunyan, they took care to stick closely by it, never being without a text to quote in their support. An epistle of the Prophet Reeve which follows, opens up somewhat more of their peculiar doctrines, which are, however, very undefined and foggy. The soul of man, they assert, is inseparably united to the body, with which it dies and will rise again. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the rejection of the truth as preached by Muggleton and Reeve. God has the real body of a man, and it is blasphemous to assert that he is an impersonal God or Spirit. The Trinity is only a variety of names for God, who Himself came down to earth and suffered death, during which time Elias was His representative in heaven.

The founders of a sect very little less erroneous than their own were the most violent opponents of the new prophets. The State having, notwithstanding their flattery of Oliver Cromwell, whom they represented as "Mortal Hebrew Jew" to whom all were to bow down, and whose acts in putting to death the king and assuming the Pro-

tectorate they approved, quietly put them in prison, and left them there unnoticed, punishing them, indeed, by whippings for their cursings and blasphemies, but doing no more. William Penn and George Fox, who claimed for themselves a Divine revelation, set upon them with their pens, and would indeed, have taken more carnal weapons to them if they could. These works continued for nearly twenty years, William Penn leading the way in a tract called "The New Witnesses proved Old Heretics" (4to. 1672), and another hand closing it by "A True Representation of the Absurd and Mischievous Principles of a Sect commonly called the Muggletonians" (4to. London, 1694). Three years after this date, Muggleton, who had long survived his companion, died in great sanctity at the patriarchal age of eighty-eight.

Perhaps, as little causes determine great events, it is only to his peculiar surname that Lodowick owes the honour of naming the sect—perhaps it was because he was the more energetic and the longer liver of the two. His other opponents, for there were many, for the honour of being the two last witnesses of the 11th chapter of Revelation, made no mark on the world. Who now hears of Bull and Varnum, of John Tanee and John Robbins? The people appear to have accepted, on good faith, the assertions of John Reeve and his Mouth, and, in the midst of dumb instructors, to have listened to any rash madman who choose to cry out loud enough. As Oliver Cromwell had been pronounced a "Mortal and Spiritual Jew, a natural Lion of the tribe of Judah, according to the flesh,"

to whom Muggleton was "commissionated" to give advice —which, to be fair, was very good of its kind—so also the people were told, "You that are spiritual may know that the *Roman Gentiles* spoken of by *John*, are those people by men called *Cavileers*], whose princely Race sprang from the loins of King Herod, that bloody persecutor of the Lord of Glory, and so streamed into the line of the tyrannical *Roman Empire*, or *Popedom*." Whether this satisfied candid inquirers we are not able to say. Some, indeed, suggested that the Caviliers were Devil-born, and that Laud was Old Nick himself, just as others made Oliver and his Parliament derive all their spirit from the same diabolical source.

A writer in one of the encyclopædias, who tells us that a complete set of the works of Reeve and Muggleton was published by some of their modern followers in 1832 (it is far from complete), adds that these men held very singular and not very intelligible doctrines concerning angels and devils. According to them "the soul of man is united inseparably with the body, with which it dies, and will rise again." This doctrine may be a mere expansion of the belief in the Church of England, which declares in its creed the resurrection of the body—an apostolic article of belief. The question therefore of what became of the soul during the interval between death and judgment was not unreasonably solved by Muggleton, supposing that it lay torpid and rose again to reanimate the body and to receive its due punishment or its gracious reward. As the doctrine of purgatory, to which perhaps our High Church people pre-

sently may tend, was, and is by the Thirty-nine Articles declared to be a fond superstition and damnable error, having no warrantry in Scripture, where indeed there is not the shadow of the shade of a sentence (the book of the Maccabees being out of court) to be quoted in its favour. Muggleton's supposition that the soul subsides or is withdrawn from the body for a time, is not without reason. Not one of us knows anything about it; the question asked Lazarus* is still left unanswered; there lives no record of reply. Doctor Johnson arguing upon Kit Smart's madness, said that one charge against him was that he asked people to pray with him in the street, and said the doctor, "I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as with anybody else." So we may as lief believe with Lodowick Muggleton as to the indivisibility of the body and soul. Not so with his anthropomorphism.

On the whole, Lodowick, if a blasphemous heretic, as William Penn called him, was infinitely purer and less mischievous than such prophets as Joseph Smith, Orson Pratt, and the rest of the Mormons. There is and there ever has been in the human mind a credulous disposition

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* "Where wert thou, brother, those four days?"
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die,
Had surely added praise to praise.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
He told it not; or something seal'd
The lips of that evangelist.

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*, xxxi.

to believe in men of strong will who have the madness or boldness to declare that the heavens have been opened to them, and the decrees of God made plain. Muggleton and Reeve declared, indeed, that they were the last audible prophets from the Court of God ; but every age since their time has seen its dozens of like prophets, of whom the world happily takes no heed, save when breaking the Queen's peace they render themselves amenable to the laws of that society which they pretend to purify.

Muggleton, whilst he spread many errors, combated others. He was greatly opposed to those who believed only in King Jesus and his "Personal Reign" here on earth. "It is," he says, "rank folly to believe that men can read the designs of the Lord, and point out the day, the year, or the century in which the Lord's reign shall begin." But being himself "commissionated," he is permitted to know the names of the two last witnesses, and the time of their call. These were of course "Self and Co.;" and one part of their proof was that the witnesses were not to be clothed like citizens, Lord Mayors, and Aldermen, in silk and plush, but in sackcloth. Also, they were to be put to death; and we greatly mistake the temper of the mad self-styled prophets if the very fact of their being permitted to die quietly in their beds was not the unkindest cut which they could receive from an ungrateful and an unbelieving world.

The most curious work which they have left for the benefit of the spiritual discerning reader is called, "A Divine Looking-glass, or the Third and Last Testament of Our Lord, &c, whose personal Residence is seated on

his Throne of Glory in another World." We omit many repetitions of the sacred names in giving these titles, for the two last Prophets were as fond of calling them out as is a Mussulman Fakir. In this last Testament the authors solve many scriptural riddles. They tell us of the form and nature of God from all eternity. They answer "the highest Querico concerning the eternal state of mankind." They assert that there is "no reason in God," and of what substances earth and water were from eternity. They tell us, but in so loose a manner that we are no wiser than before, of what form and nature angels were, and how they were created, and who Antichrist is; and they are especially learned about "the Serpent that tempted Eve," who, they assert, was a very beautiful and graceful young angel in the form of man, who certainly did not offer to our common mother "a mere apple from a wooden tree," but, in fact, seduced her from her allegiance to Adam, and thus became actually the Father of Cain, and through him of all the wicked people or sons of the devil upon earth. But unfortunately we have heard all this before. "I should never have done," says Bayle, "were I to relate all the fictions that are to be found in books concerning Eve and the Serpent;" and, indeed, from Josephus to Cajetan, Lanjado and Nicholas de Lyra, there have been some pretty theories broached, none more so than those by the over curious in the first and second centuries of the Church. "We are not to believe, therefore," sneers Bayle, "all the fine compliments which Alcimus Avitus reports to have passed on both sides; for according to the narrative of Moses, this great affair was ended in a few words."

The remainder of the last Testament of these two prophets is filled with a great deal of what Mr. Carlyle terms "clotted nonsense." The authors flounder from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, and in and out of each; they condemn the unlawfulness of cutting off the head magistrate, and yet praise Cromwell; they propagate more errors than they preach against; they are ever ready with a "damnation to all eternity" for their opponents; and, in short, they act like the wild, mad, hot Gospellers they were. Their books have a saddening effect on us. They prove how easily a little incoherent but vivid assertion without proof will attract the faith of man, without even an appeal to his cupidity or to his baser passions, such as have been made by other false prophets from Mohammed to Joe Smith the Mormon. Muggleton and Reeve are singularly free from any such base appeals, nor do they make any exorbitant promises to their spiritually discerning brethren—never being, to use their own trope, at variance with what they thought to be true, "any more than William Lily and his learned brethren, in the astrologian figure, dare say the sun and moon were with themselves." Perhaps it is to this want of mixture of the worst traits of human folly in their scheme that they owe the decay of their sect. So late as 1832 some of their followers reprinted in three volumes the Epistles and Gospels according to Muggleton; but in the Census of 1851, their names had disappeared from the classification of sects and faith in the prophet Muggleton was not found upon the earth.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Religio Medici. The Eighth Edition, corrected and amended. With Annotations, never before published, upon all the obscure passages. London, 1682.

Observations on Religio Medici. By Sir Kenelm Digby. First Edition. 1682.

Works of Sir Thomas Browne. Edited by Simon Wilkin, F.L.S. Three volumes. London, 1852.

Urn Burial, Christian Morals, and Miscellanies. By Sir Thomas Browne. Edinburgh, 1825.

The Retrospective Review. Art. vii. Vol. 1. Article, *Sir Thomas Browne.* London, 1820.

The Eclectic Review. No. lxii. New Series. Article, *Sir Thomas Browne.*

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE is one of those writers who stand quite alone. There is no one like him either in the literature which he adorned, or in that of any other country. He is also one of whom we are never tired of hearing or of speculating, one whose very weaknesses are so peculiar that we would not part with them, and whose faults shine, in the eyes of some, with a lustre that surpasses the virtues of less original writers. His effect upon English literature has been very great indeed; he seems to have inspired half-a-dozen at least of our most weighty preachers: and it was upon his style that Dr. Johnson formed his own,—a style upon which many of the most thoughtful and weighty, one indeed might say heavy, of our Quarterly reviewers and leader writers, yet build their own, and which descended to, and was admired when practised by, Dr. Parr, although with him remained only the nodosities of the oak with-

out its strength.* And we must remember that even Johnson's best English was but an imitation, and many hold but a feeble imitation, of the splendour and piled-up grandeur which abounds in almost every work or pamphlet written by the Norwich physician. And yet few people read Browne's works, few, or comparatively few. They are, it is true, appreciated in America, where fine old English literature seems to have struck a new root, and to flourish with the luxuriance of plants which are happy in a virgin soil, and whose people, descendants of our own, of a freer and more reflective growth, often appreciate those writers whom we most neglect, as is the case with Mr. Herbert Spencer; but in England Browne may well be classed as one who is but rarely read. A public writer and reviewer in conversation mistook him for Tom Brown, the facetious author of the "Laconics;" and a lady, hearing the name, suggested that he might be a living author, and writer of Mr. Hughes's fresh and excellent book, "Tom Brown's School-days."†

* Speaking of Croft's imitation of Johnson's style, Burke said, "No, no, it is not a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength; it has all the contortions of the sybil without the inspiration."—*Prior's Life of Burke.*

† How calmly ignorant some authors may be is seen in Lord Campbell's "Life of Chief Justice Hale." Hale believed in witchcraft, and tried and condemned, in 1665, very unrighteously alas, for direct evidence went in favour of their innocence, Amy Denny and Rose Cullender, two poor old women, who were accused of dealings with the devil. Sir Thomas Browne was an important witness in this trial; but, as the "Eclectic Review" points out,

A paper upon such a writer will therefore be surely not out of the way in this collection of bibliographic essays.

"According to the common fate of orphans," says Dr. Johnson, in a biography of this excellent writer, "Thomas Browne, when a minor, was defrauded by the lawyers and trustees of much of the fortune which was left him by his father, a rich merchant* of London, where his celebrated son was born in the year 1605. The family was a good one, for there then obtained none of that despicable and silly contempt for trade which is so hurtful to those who feel and express it, and to those who endure it, since that which we openly despise soon degrades itself to the level of our contempt. When proud people look down upon tradesmen they are not philosophical enough to perceive that they are absolutely inviting those very tradesmen, whom they ask to bow and cringe, to repay themselves for their servility by a golden plaster for their wounded pride. Certainly like Erasmus and others, Browne suffered from his guardians, but was enabled to be educated first in London, then at Winchester, and finally at Broadgate Hall, now Pembroke College, Oxford, which he entered when he was of age, and after due time took his degree of M.A. June 11th, 1629."

Lord Campbell "either knew nothing about him or did not recognize him, for he is, as usual, inaccurate in his details, and throughout misspells his name, calling him Dr. Brown."

* So Johnson; but it would appear that this merchant was a rich tradesman, like Izaak Walton, a mercer, but a gentleman of good family in Cheshire:—See *European Magazine*, xi. p. 89.

His mother had married Sir Thomas Dutton, probably by the inducement of her fortune, says Johnson, and it may well have been so, for as the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and other contemporary writers, sufficiently prove, certain poor knights were ready enough to come into the city to pick up a golden cargo; and to marry a rich widow, as they would carry away an ugly picture, merely for the golden frame which surrounded it. Browne's mother, lady Dutton, took as her fortune three thousand pounds, a sum equal at least to twelve thousand pounds now, leaving her son, "by consequence, six thousand (this would be correct had he been an only child, but he had a brother and two sisters), a large sum for a man destined to learning at that time, when commerce had not filled the nation *with nominal riches.*" So speaks his pupil and admirer, Samuel Johnson. It is perhaps lucky for us that Sir Thomas Dutton and the rich widow, aided by the gentlemen of the long robe, made Sir Thomas Browne's fortune somewhat less than it was. But it does not appear that the rapacity of his guardian, of which Johnson speaks, was ever resented by Browne. After taking his degree he settled in Oxfordshire, and practised physic; but soon afterwards he quitted his settlement and accompanied his father-in-law, who had some employment in Ireland, in a visitation of the forts and castles, which the state of Ireland made necessary.

He then left Britain altogether, and went to Montpelier and Padua, celebrated schools for physic, and, indeed, for the arts of astrology and necromancy. Returning home

about the year 1633, he visited Leyden, where he took his degree of Doctor of Physic, or, as Johnson has it, caused himself to be created doctor, no very difficult thing in those days for a graduate of Oxford.

About the year 1634 he returned to London, and the next year he wrote his celebrated work, "The Religion of a Physician" (*Religio Medici*), which he declares himself, although one can scarcely believe him, was never intended for the press. It is but an unnatural thing for an author to write without any wish or desire for a public, and certainly our doctor created around him a fit audience, though few, for he lent his essay to several friends, and one of these kind souls had it surreptitiously copied and printed. He suffered them (the MSS.) to wander from hand to hand, says Johnson, "till at last, without his own consent, they were, in 1642, given to a printer. This has, *perhaps*, sometimes befallen others; and this I am willing to believe did really happen to Dr. Browne: but there is surely some reason to doubt the truth of the complaint so frequently made of surreptitious editions."

Reason enough, but this does not concern us now. Let us be thankful that we have a whole and sound book, and one that the world would not willingly let die. Upon this book his fame principally rests, and indeed, with three or four other tractates included with it, such is the richness of our English literature, the "Religio Medici" would be all that one, who could not afford a large library, would demand. For this book contains specimens of all his beauties, his noble faith, bordering, in fact, on superstition,

as if indeed that were a necessary supplement to a bold and noble faith, founded on the dictum of Tertullian, *Certum est quia impossibile est*, and demanding a difficulty to exercise its strength, his tenderness, grandeur, pathos, wild sublimity, richness of thought and word, are all there, as also his many latinising and quaint obscurities, and his sometimes teasing paradoxes.

Presuming the "Religio" to have been written in 1635, its author was then settled at Norwich, where his practice was very extensive, and where many patients resorted to him. He had there settled, says Wood, in the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, by the persuasion of Doctor Lushington, his tutor at Oxford, who was rector of Burnham Westgate, in the neighbourhood. In 1637 he was incorporated Doctor of Physic in Oxford, and in 1641 he married the daughter of Edward Mileham, Esq. of Burlingham, in Norfolk. With that county and town our London-born physician is eternally connected; one almost wishes that he was indeed Norfolk-born, so thoroughly do the best and most learned inhabitants of the county and city appreciate the fame which their illustrious indweller has shed over them.

Browne's marriage called down upon him some raillery from contemporary wits, for his book had been much read and very widely criticised. In Howell's Letters, Book I, No. 4, there is some rather broad fun made with a man who had expressed a very vivid, and no doubt an earnest wish that the generations of man might be carried on like those of plants and trees, and who had said some rude

things of woman; but it must be confessed in merely a humorous way. "The whole world was made for man, but only a twelfth part of man for woman;" and "man is the whole world, but woman only the rib or crooked part of him." These are sentences that will not break any woman's peace of mind, any more than will Tennyson's true-hearted declaration that "Woman is the lesser man."

By his wife, Dame Dorothy Browne, Sir Thomas had a large family, and all these "turned out," as the world has it, very well. Dr. Edward, the eldest, was physician to St. Bartholomew's hospital and to the king, and five years before his death became President of the College of Physicians, to which he presented that portrait of his father lately exhibited at South Kensington. Thomas, the second son, died at the age of twenty-one, after having proved himself to be an able officer in a king's ship. The daughters were well married, and living peaceably at Norwich. The kind and patient physician to Bishop Hall, the most notable citizen of that ancient city, and distinguished above his fellow-citizens by being knighted by Charles II. when he visited Norwich, Sir Thomas Browne, ripened in age, wisdom, and fame, and died in 1682, like Shakespeare in this one point, that he deceased on his birthday, after a violent attack of the cholic, to which he had been a short time subject. He seems to have died as he had lived and grown old, very gracefully and nobly. He had asserted in his best book, when he was but thirty, that he could endure pain, even the cutting off of an arm without much noise; so he

endured the pain of the cholic and fever with as "much patience as hath been seen in any man," says a biographer, copying his style, "without any pretence of animosity, stoical apathy, or vanity of not being concerned thereat, or suffering no impeachment of happiness. *Nihil agis dolor.* I visited him near his end, when he had not strength to hear or speak much; the last words which I did hear from him were, besides some expressions of dearness, that he did freely submit to the will of God, being without fear."

His remains were buried in the church of St. Peter's, Mancroft, in Norwich—Le Neve, who says the cathedral, is mistaken—a handsome old church above the market hill, which has (1866) recently been repaired and restored. His wife, Dame Dorothy Browne, who had been his true helpmeet for forty-one years, placed a Latin inscription on a mural tablet of the south pillar near the altar, which recites that there lies the body of Thomas Browne, M.D. *et Miles*, that he was a learned physician, very skilled in his art, that he was the author of "Religio Medici," "Pseudodoxia Epidemica," and other works, that he was well-known all over the world, *per orbem notissimus*, that he was most religious, honest, and learned, and that his most sorrowful wife ("Da. Doroth. Br.") had piously placed that tablet to his memory. An English inscription, shorter, but to the same effect, is also added; and on the opposite side of the chancel is the tomb which completes the history, that of Dame Dorothy Browne, his true wife, who survived her husband little more than two years. Of his coffin and its inscription,

and other matters which have lately come to light, we shall have something to add at the conclusion of this paper.

The publication of the "Religio Medici," was followed at due intervals by those of "Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Vulgar Errors," in seven books, of "Hydriotaphia, or Urn Burial," of the "Garden of Cyrus," of "A Letter to a Friend upon the Occasion of the Death of a Friend," and the "Miscellany Tracts," some of which are very curious and quaint, as, for instance, that of the "Musæum Clausum," or "Bibliotheca Abscondita," wherein the author discourses of certain books and pictures which do not exist, and revels in the parade of a very curious learning. But the "Religio Medici," as it was his first, will always be considered his chief work. It jumped suddenly into fame. The Earl of Dorset recommended this book to Sir Kenelm Digby, and Digby, in twenty-four hours, part of which were spent in procuring and in reading the book, returned it, not with a letter, but with a book, in which there are "some just remarks, acute censures, and profound speculations."* Such a review as that, issued by Sir Kenelm Digby, and addressed to the Earl of Dorset, was enough to sell any work, the public read it with avidity, and booksellers showed an equal eagerness in pirating, with hack authors in imitating, it. So that in 1682, the year of his death, it had reached the eighth edition, which lies before me, the last published during the author's lifetime, but which is in reality the eleventh. It has a curious frontispiece of a

* Dr. Johnson's Life of Browne.

man falling from a high rock into the sea, but upheld by a hand from heaven; written near his body are the words *A Cœlo Salus* (there is safety, or salvation, from above), and beneath the plate an inscription, referring to the book only, which states that a copy was surreptitiously printed before under the same title, but that it is imperfect.

It is well to be thus particular, because this frontispiece, which Simon Wilkin does not appear to have seen, indicates very fully the religious tendencies of Sir Thomas Browne's mind. But just as hasty readers of prejudiced reviews could accuse the author of "Ecce Homo" of Atheism, so the enemies which his success raised up accused Browne also of that sin. And whatever may be said of either work, that it proceeded from an Atheistic mind is utterly absurd and untrue. Good and orthodox Christians, like Dr. Johnson himself, have long ago received Browne as amongst themselves. It were an insult even to do as Dr. Johnson has done, namely, to select passages from the work to defend the author. The whole work is its best defence; the whole life of the author, who every day went to church, and took the Sacrament every month, is the best answer to this cruel lying scandal. Beyond this the book suffered from imitations, the "Religion of a Physician, the Religion of a Layman" (Lord Herbert); "Religio Jurisconsulti"—the Religion of a Lawyer; the Religion of a Physician" (Browne's title, but in English), by Edmund Gayton; the "Religion of a Stoic;" "Religio Clerici; or, A Short Discourse on Atheism," by Sir G. M.; and the "Religio Philosophi Peripatetici

discutienda"—the Religion of a Peripatetic Philosopher (this was an earlier work, not an imitation); "Religio Militis"—the Layman's Religion; "A Gentleman's Religion," in three parts; and "Religio Bibliopolæ"—the Religion of a Bookseller, written by a hack writer, Mr. Benjamin Bridgewater, of Trinity Coll. Camb. M.A. "Alas!" says Dunton, "love and wine were the ruin of this ingenious gentleman;" possibly we may add to these two causes that of overwork thrust upon the poor fellow by the booksellers.*

The occasion of the open avowal of Browne's faith was to refute the general scandal of his profession, which asserts that where there are three physicians two are Atheists, *ubi tres medici duo Athei*, and a wish to recite the causes of his belief, and to show, as he nobly says, that "I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian;" that he does not only owe that name to the font, nor to his education, but that he has examined and believed in his riper years and his confirmed judgment. It is curious that after such a declaration any one should have been so bold as to declare Browne an infidel; still more curious does it appear after reading such very beautiful, such wide and truly reverential sentences as these:—

"Thus there are two Books from whence I collect my Divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universal and publick manuscript, that

* See Simon Wilkin's preface to his edition of Browne's Works, where these and other imitations are mentioned.

lies expans'd unto the eyes of all, those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other; this was the Scripture and Theology of the Heathens; the natural motion of the Sun made them more admire him, than its supernatural station did the Children of Israel; the ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in them than in the other all his Miracles; surely the Heathens knew better how to joyn and read these mystical Letters, than we Christians, who cast a more careless Eye on these common Hieroglyphicks, and disdain to suck Divinity from the flowers of Nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of Nature; which I define not with the Schools to be the principle of motion and rest, but that streight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of His creatures according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the Nature of the Sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve, by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of Nature God seldome alters or perverts, but like an excellent Artist hath so contrived his work, that with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweetneth the Water with a Word, preserveth the creatures in the Ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created; for God is like a skilful Geometrician, who when more easily and with one stroak of his Compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way; according to the

constituted and fore-laid principles of his art, yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the World with his Prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power, and conclude he could not; and thus I call the effects of Nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honour of the principal agent, upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writing. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind of species of creature whatsoever; I cannot tell by what Logick we call a Toad, a Bear, or an Elephant ugly, they being created in those outward shapes and figures, which best express those actions of their inward forms. And having past that general Visitation of God who saw that all that he had made was good, that is comformable to his Will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty; there is no deformity but in Monstrosity, wherein notwithstanding there is a kind of Beauty. Nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal Fabrics. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never anything ugly or mis-shapen but the Chaos; wherein notwithstanding to speak strictly there was no deformity, because no form, nor was it yet impregnant by the voice of God; now nature is not at variance with Art, nor Art with Nature, they being both servants of his Providence; Art is the perfection

of Nature: were the World now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a Chaos. Nature hath made one World, and Art another. In brief, all thing are artificial; *for Nature is the Art of God."—Religio Medici*, pp. 31-33.

He afterwards tells us that which must have bitterly offended the Puritans, while, on the other hand, much that he has written must have been equally unpalatable to the Romanists. He must have been regarded as a trimmer, because he steered clear of excesses on either side. But Sir Thomas was true to himself. In after-life he was the firm friend of Bishop Hall, who had, in his "Shaking of the Olive-tree" bewailed "the (Puritan) pulling up of brasses from the walls and graves, the destruction of painted glass, the breaking of monuments, the demolishing of curious stone work that had not any representation in the world, but only the fancy of the founder and the skill of the mason, the breaking up of the organs, and the toting and piping upon the destroyed organ pipes, and the hideous and sacrilegious rout and burning in the market place." Who would not bewail such work? And who will not so bewail such other work when the excess of ritualism provokes it? Against the good contained in the Romish Church, however, neither did Sir Thomas Browne, nor will any true Christian set himself. Browne writes thus nobly:—

"Yet have I not so shaken hands with those desperate Resolvers;* who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom, than bring her in to be new trimm'd in the Dock;

* In all editions this word is printed "resolutions;" which, as not being a proper antecedent to the relative, I have taken the liberty of altering.

who had rather promiscuously retain all than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been, as to stand in Diameter and Swords point with them; we have reformed from them not against them; for omitting those Improperations and Terms of Scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our Affections, and not our Cause, there is between us, one common Name and Appellation, one Faith and necessary body of Principles common to us both, and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their Churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them or for them; I could never perceive any rational Consequence from those many Texts which prohibit the Children of Israel to pollute themselves with the Temples of the Heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might prophane our Prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved Conscience may not adore her Creator anywhere, especially in places devoted to his Service; where if their Devotions offend him, mine may please him; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it: Holy-water and Crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all: I am I confess naturally inclined to that which misguided Zeal terms Superstition. My common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity; yet at my Devotion I should violate my own arm rather than a Church, nor willingly defame the name of Saint or Martyr.

"At the sight of a Cross or Crucifix I can dispense with

my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour; I cannot laugh at, but rather pity the fruitless journeys of Pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of Fryars; for though misplaced in Circumstances, there is something in it of Devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary Bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they direct their Devotions to Her I offered mine to God, and rectifie the Errors of their Prayers by rightly ordering mine own."

It is in the curious and nice questions of faith, in questions old as the first opponents of Christianity, and new as Dr. Colenso's book, that Browne revels. These afford him strong nuts to try the teeth of his faith upon. He himself "could show a catalogue of doubts," he adds, "never yet imagined or questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing; not fantastick queries or objections of air, for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind; that Lazarus was raised from the dead, and yet not demand where in the interim his soul awaited. Whether Eve was framed out of the rib of Adam I dispute not; *because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of man.* That she was edified out of the rib of Adam I believe; yet raise no question who shall rise with that rib at the resurrection. Likewise whether the world was created in autumn, sum-

mer, or the spring; because it was created in them all: for whatever sign the sun possesseth, those four seasons are actually existent." So he continues, and then grandly, as Samson broke the withies that bound him, he throws these doubts away. "There are (*sic*) a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy, but in divinity, *proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities*, which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies. Pieces fit only to be placed in Pantagruel's library, or bound up with Tartaretus' *De Modo Cacandi*."

It is in the "Letter to a Friend" that Sir Thomas achieves the most sublime heights; and truly when reading these we find that the praise of Coleridge was not excessive, hardly, indeed, sufficient, when applied to the knight. For he is indeed "rich in various knowledge, exuberant in conceptions and conceits; contemplative, imaginative, often truly great and magnificent in his style and diction, though, doubtless, too often big, stiff, and *hyper-Latinistic*. He is a quiet and sublime enthusiast, with a strong tinge of the fantast: the humourist constantly mingling with and flashing across the philosopher, as the darting colours in shot silk play upon the main dye." The following solemn passage, in which this sublime fantast meditates on a dying man, and resolves how he himself will pass away, is worthy of all the praise that Coleridge bestows upon his style:—

"In this deliberate and creeping progress unto the grave, he was somewhat too young and of too noble a mind, to fall upon that stupid symptom observable in

divers persons near their journey's end, and which may be reckoned among the mortal symptoms of their last disease; that is to become more narrow-minded, miserable, and tenacious, unready to part with anything, when they are ready to part with all, and afraid to want when they have no time to spend; meanwhile physicians who know that many are mad but in a single depraved imagination, and one prevalent decipiency; and that beside and out of such single deliriums, a man may meet with sober actions and good sense in bedlam; cannot but smile to see the heirs and concerned relations gratulating themselves on the sober departure of their friends; and though they behold such mad covetous passages, content to think they die in good understanding and in their sober senses.

"Avarice which is not only infidelity but idolatry, either from covetous progeny or questuary education, had no root in his breast, who made good works the expression of his faith, and was big with desires unto public and lasting charities; and surely where good wishes and charitable intentions exceed abilities, theoretical beneficency may be more than a dream. They build not castles in the air who would build churches on earth; and though they leave no such structures here, may lay good foundations in heaven. In brief, his life and death were such that I could not blame them who wished the like, and almost to have been himself; almost, I say; for though we may wish the prosperous appurtenances of others, or to be another in his happy accidents, yet so intrinsical is every man unto himself, that some doubt may

be made, whether any would exchange his being or substantially become another man.

"He had wisely seen the world at home and abroad, and thereby observed under what variety men are deluded in the pursuit of that which is not here to be found. And although he had no opinion of reputed felicities below and apprehended men widely out in the estimate of such happiness, yet his sober contempt of the world, wrought no democritism or cynicism, no laughing or snarling at it, as well understanding there are not felicities in this world to satisfy a serious mind, and therefore, to soften the stream of our lives, we are fain to take in the reputed contentions of this world, to unite with the crowd in their beatitudes, and to make ourselves happy by consortion, opinion, or co-existimation; for strictly to separate from received and customary felicities, and to confine unto the rigour of realities, were to contract the consolation of our beings unto too uncomfortable circumscriptions.

"Not to fear death, nor desire it, was short of his resolution: to be dissolved, and be with Christ, was his dying ditty. He conceived his thread long, in no long course of years, and when he had scarce outlived the second life of Lazarus, esteeming it enough to approach the years of his Saviour, who so ordered his own human state, as not to be old upon earth. But to be content with death may be better than to desire it; a miserable life may make us wish for death, but a virtuous one to rest in it; which is the advantage of those resolved Christians, who, looking on death not only as the sting, but the period and end of

sin, the horizon and isthmus between this life and a better, and the death of this world but as a nativity of another, do contentedly submit unto the common necessity, and envy not Enoch or Elias.

"Not to be content with life is the unsatisfactory state of those who destroy themselves, who, being afraid to live, run blindly upon their own death, which no man fears by experience, and the stoics had a notable doctrine to take away the fear thereof, that is, in such extremities, to desire that which is not to be avoided, and wish what might be feared, and so make evils voluntary, and to suit with their own desires, which took off the terror of them.

"But the ancient martyrs were not encouraged by such fallacies, who, though they feared not death, were afraid to be their own executioners, and therefore thought it more wisdom to crucify their lusts than their bodies, to circumcise than stab their hearts, and to mortify than kill themselves."

Sir Thomas is very great in the art of approaching a climax, and leads us gently onwards till we are astonished with the force of the simple English words. And though the sublime fantast is seen everywhere even more than the careful builder-up of sentences, yet his careful research, his personal observation, his painstaking labour, and his finished accuracy should be especially noted by the student. "I take little pleasure," he says somewhere, "to drink the waters of knowledge, *instar canis ad Nilum*, like a dog at the Nile, as the proverb—a lick and away." Hence in his "Vulgar Errors," although there are some absurdities

doubtless which he still believes, yet there are numbers of errors which he corrects from his own observation, such as that of the Death Watch, the insect occasioning which noise he had observed and noted; nor has modern science added, in that instance, much to our knowledge, save the Linnæan name. The absurdity of some of these errors is, of course, as a critic says, "obvious." And the critic cites some heads from Browne's note-book as particularly foolish, such as, "Whether children before they are forty days old laugh upon tickling? Whether possession be not often mistaken for witchcraft, and many now thought to be bewitched that are indeed possessed?" Now, from a physician who had very minutely studied his art, a question when children really laugh, an act betokening intelligence, or may grin spasmodically, is not so very ridiculous. The other matter is much deeper, and gives us the keynote to Sir Thomas Browne's character. We have seen that he has been accused of atheism by the unthinkers; the truth is, his mind was so sincerely religious, and so truly devout, that in every word he wrote, and in every action of his life, we behold, as it were, a reference to the ever-present God. As he believed in a God, so he believed in a devil. Hence his undoubted faith in witchcraft, his by no means ridiculous query, whether *possession* be not often mistaken for witchcraft, and many now thought to be bewitched that are indeed *possessed?* Curiously, the resuscitated belief in spirits recalls this very powerfully, and assures us that Sir Thomas was, as usual, not ridiculous, but only much more serious and deep than his accusers. The ex-

periences of Professor De Morgan, the attestations of the Howitts, of Mrs. S. C. Hall and her husband, and of a very well-known band of writers, the assertions of persons, of whom the present writer has seen some hundreds in a room, who could hardly be all rogues and dupes, assure us that there is something now abroad which answers very closely to demoniacal possession. A very philosophical writer indeed, if one little known, has asserted, after a seven years' study of the subject, that spiritualism is diabolism, and has traced very lucidly the similarity of agencies in the cases of witchcraft and spiritualism. Be that as it may, all that we wish here to maintain is that the mind of Sir Thomas Browne was of far too high a class for any reviewer to pronounce him ridiculous. We have seen that he believed in witchcraft, and in the year 1665, when Amy Duny and Rose Cullender, two old women of Lowestoft, were tried at Bury St. Edmund's upon the charge of bewitching people, he, then Dr. Thomas Browne, attested "that the devil did work upon the bodies of men and women in a natural foundation, that is, he did stir up and excite such humours superabounding in their bodies to a great excess, whereby he did in an extraordinary manner afflict them with such distempers as their bodies were most subject to." Truly a philosophical and Brownish view of witchcraft. Chief Justice Hale presided, and charged the jury, when, alas, there was but too good a reason to acquit, to convict the prisoners; for, as a writer observes, "there is a vast difference between a witness who honestly deposes to abstract principles, and a judge

and jury who carelessly apply those principles to the prisoners at the bar."

In 1716, Archdeacon Jeffery printed, at Cambridge, a work of Browne's, which, although heard of, had hitherto lain hidden from the public, and which had, indeed part of it, appeared in his "Letter to a Friend:" this is his "Christian Morals." The sonorous beauty of the sentences is quite unsurpassed in the English language, and the paradoxical quaintness of many, serves to fix them on one's memory, and to make the little book a golden one for sober thinkers. The first sentence, which, by the way, began the closing reflections in the "Letter to a Friend," will at once arrest the reader:—

"Tread softly and circumspectly in this funambulatory* track and narrow path of goodness; pursue virtue virtuously; leaven not good actions, nor render virtue disputable.

"In this virtuous voyage of thy life hull not about like the ark, without the use of rudder, mast, or sail, and bound for no port. Let not disappointment cause despondency, nor difficulty despair.

"Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but by the extent of thy grave, and reckon thyself above the earth by the line thou must be contented with when under it.

"When God forsakes us Satan also leaves us; for such offenders he looks upon as sure and sealed up, and his temptations then needless unto them.

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* Narrow, like the walk of a rope dancer.—*Dr. Johnson.*

"The sick man's sacrifice is but a lame oblation.

"Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and think it more satisfaction to live richly than to die rich.

"Trust not to the omnipotency of gold, and say not unto it, Thou art my confidence. Kiss not thy hand to that terrestrial Sun, nor bore thy ear unto its servitude. A slave unto mammon makes no servant unto God.

"Persons lightly dipt, not grained in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness and faint hued in integrity.

"Let not the law of thy country be the non-ultra of thy honesty; nor think that always good enough which the law will make good. Narrow not the law of charity, equity, mercy. Join gospel righteousness with legal right. Be not a mere Gamaliel in the faith, but let thy Sermon in the Mount be thy targum unto the law of Sinai.

"Let not the Sun in Capricorn* go down upon thy wrath, but write thy wrongs in ashes. Draw the curtain of night upon injuries, shut them up in the tower of oblivion, and let them be as though they had not been."

These are noble sentences, full of a true poetic ring; prose that, with very little transposition, might make verse worthy of Shakespeare himself. A critic, in a paper which assumes much, quarrelled with the present writer's interpretation of diabolism from Διαβάλλω, I calumniate, deceive, traduce; what will the learned gentleman say to Sir Thomas Browne's derivation and injunction?

* When the days are shortest.

"While thou so hotly disclaimest the devil, be not guilty of diabolism. Fall not into one name with that unclean spirit, nor act his nature whom thou so much abhorrest; that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others. Degenerous depravities and narrow-minded vices! not only below St. Paul's noble Christian, but Aristotle's true gentleman."

The "Musæum Clausum; or, Bibliotheca Abscondita" has been well characterized as "the sport of a singular scholar." Emulating the singularity of others, Sir Thomas Browne appears to have rivalled Rabelais in his "Catalogue of Books in the Library of St. Victor." The tract is but a bare list of books, not those that we have, but those that we *ought* to have. They are indeed, as he terms them, "remarkable books, antiquities, pictures, and rarities of several kinds, *scarce or never seen* by any man living." The first is, "A Poem of Ovidius Naso, written in the Gethick language during his exile at Tomos," &c. Then follows "A letter of Quintus Cicero, which he wrote in answer to his brother, Marcus Tullius, desiring him an account of Britany, wherein are described the country, state, and manners of the Britans of that age." "A Submarine Herbal, describing the several vegetables found on the rocks, valleys, meadows at the bottom of the sea, with many sorts of alga, fucus, quercus, polygonum, gramen, and others not yet described." This has been partially done. "Seneca's Epistles to St. Paul" is certainly a book much to be desired, so are the "'Duo Cæsaris Anti-Catones;' two notable books of Julius

Cæsar against Cato, mentioned by Livy," and much to be lamented is the loss of King Solomon's treatise "De Umbris Idearum," which Chicus Asculanus in his comment upon Sacrobosco would have us believe he saw in the library of the Duke of Bavaria." The "rarities" we do not so much desire, but a list of them opens to us a curious chamber in the knight's mind. Why should he desire "A neat crucifix made out of the cross-bone on a frog's head," or the "Homerie battle of frogs and mice neatly described upon the chisel-bone of a pike's jaw," or "the skin of a snake bred out of the spinal marrow of a man." He who knows where all this treasure is, Browne concludes drily, "is a great Apollo; I am sure I am not he."

In his domestic correspondence Browne proves himself a very affectionate, careful, and indulgent father, looking after not only the temporal but the spiritual welfare of his sons. "Honest Tom," he writes to his son Thomas travelling in France, "I hope by this time thou art got somewhat beyond *plaist-il*, and *ouy Monsieur*, and durst ask a question and give an answer in French, and therefore now I hope you goe to the Protestant church to which must not be backward, for tho' their church order and discipline be different from ours, yet they agree with us in doctrine and the main of religion. Pray be careful to serve God in the first place. *Thy writing is much mended, but still you forget to make points.* I shall be glad if you get a handsome garb and gait. Be temperate and sober the whole course of your life; keep no bad or uncivil company; be courteous and humble in your conversation, still shun-

ning pudor rusticus." The wise Polonius* could not have given better advice. We have seen that the sons lived to his credit, and that Dr. Edward Browne, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, cherished the memory of his illustrious father. Now and then we find a sign in letters from that father that Edward may have been slightly extravagant. "Espargnez vous," he writes in old French, "spare us as much as you can, for I am grown old, and have much anxiety and trouble to support my family." To us there is something very delicate in the old Knight's running into a foreign language when he would hint that his favourite son was not to make too heavy a pull upon his purse. With that son's son, "little Tommy," to amuse him—a little boy whom he loved exceedingly and indulged in all sorts of childish amusements, a pretty picture in a silver box from Flanders, Punch and his Wife, a show king and queen and ladies of honour, and a tumbler, a wooden fellow that turns his heels over his head,"—Sir Thomas grew pleasantly old, and died, as we have seen, boldly and manfully when his time came. He was not unaddicted to verse, and had written that which Bishop Ken has imitated in his beautiful evening hymn :—†

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* A character always or almost always, mistaken by the players, and often by critics, as a mere maxim-babbler, with a touch of the pantaloon in him.

† Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, so that I may
Rise glorious at the awful day.

Sleep is a death, O let me try
By sleeping what it is to die!
And as gently lay my head
On my grave as on my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.

Alas! the bones of the good knight have rested not without disturbance in their grave. His skull, which I have handled, adorns the Museum of Surgery in Norwich, rescued from private hands, and there deposited by G. W. W. Firth, Esq., to whom I am indebted for the following narrative of its invention by Mr. Robert Fitch, F.C.S.

"In August, 1840, some workmen, who were employed in digging a vault in the chancel of the Church of St. Peter's, Mancroft, Norwich, accidentally broke, with a blow of the pick-axe, the lid of a coffin, which proved to be that of one whose residence within its walls conferred honour on Norwich in olden times. This circumstance afforded me an opportunity of inspecting the remains. The bones of the skeleton were found to be in good preservation, particularly those of the skull, the forehead was remarkably low and depressed, the head unusually long, the back part exhibiting an uncommon appearance of depth and capaciousness; the brain was considerable in quantity, quite brown and unctuous; the hair profuse and perfect, of a fine auburn colour, similar to that in the portrait presented to the Institute in 1847, and which is carefully preserved in the vestry of St. Peter's, Mancroft. The coffin plate, which was also broken, was of brass, in the form of a shield, and bore the following:—

Amplissimus Vir
D^us^ Thomas Browne Miles, Medicinæ
Dr Annos Natus 77 Denatus 19 Die
Mensis Octobris, Anno D^ni^ 1682, hoc
Loculo indormiens, Corporis Spagy-
rici pulvere plumbum in aurum
Convertit.*

I succeeded in taking a few impressions from the plate, and have presented one, with a counter impression, to the Institute, to be deposited amongst the collection of the society. There was another singular circumstance connected with the discovery, the lead of which the coffin was made was completely decomposed, and changed to a carbonate, crumbling at the touch. Sir Thomas' mural monument is fixed to the south pillar of the altar, and opposite to this, upon the north pillar, is another mural monument to his lady, Dorothy Browne, who died three years after her husband; the inscription is in verse, probably written by their eldest son Edward, the physician to Charles the II, and president to the College of Physicians, as was also probably the inscription on the coffin plate of Sir Thomas Browne, of which the discovery has been described." †

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* Which I (G. F.) render thus:—

"The very distinguished man, Sir Thomas Browne, Knight, Doctor of Medicine, aged 77 years, who died on the 19th of October, in the year of our Lord 1682, sleeping in this coffin of lead, by the dust of his alchemic body transmutes it into a coffer of gold."

† From the proceedings of the Archæological Institute at the Annual Meeting held at Norwich in 1847.

Mr. Firth has pointed out to me, in Sir Thomas Browne's "Urn-Burial," two passages, which, if not regarded as prophetic, have yet obtained a curious significance from the despoiling of the author's resting-place:—

1. "But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried? Who hath the oracle of his ashes, or whither they are to be scattered?"

2. "To be knaved* out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking bowls, and our bones turned into pipes to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations, escaped in burning burials." †

Much learned dust was raised even about the meaning of the epitaph, written doubtlessly by Dr. Edward Browne.‡

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* Wilkins's ed. has "gnawed."—I have no doubt incorrectly.—G. W. W. F.

† Sir Thomas, it is almost needless to say, was wisely in favour of incremation.

‡ I subjoin part of a letter from Mr. Fitch, who has taken great interest in the matter, in answer to a captious critic in the *Norfolk Chronicle*, who for "Spagyrici" would read "Stagyricæ" (*sic*):—

"To Editor of *Norfolk Chronicle.*

"Dear Sir,—Having furnished you with the inscription upon Sir Thomas Browne's coffin plate, permit me to reply to your correspondent S. N.'s emendations of it, which appear to me to serve no other purpose than to mystify a very clear passage. The word Spagyrici may not be classical, but it was much used in Browne's time by the writers in his profession. Boyle used it; Johnson quotes it (surely no mean authorities), and it is the only word capable of expressing the sense intended. Your correspondent admits that the passage has allusion to the doctrine of the Alchemists, and yet singularly

Neither the dictionary of Forcellini or of Freund, no, nor even that of Dr. Smith, which professes to include mediæval and chemical words, contains the adjective *spagyricus*, and many persons have desired to alter and emendate the inscription. Dr. Johnson gives the word "Spagyrick, from *Lat. spagyricus;* and adds that it was a word coined by Paracelsus from the Teutonic *spaker*, a searcher. The meaning he gives as "chymical." Spagyrist is therefore a chymist; and Johnson cites a passage from Boyle wherein that meditative philosopher has used it to signify an experimentaliser, "though," says he, speaking of a chemical change, "many naturalists cannot easily believe it, among the more curious *spagyrists* it be very well known."

So here let us leave this spagyrical writer; the spade of the sexton may have grated against that dear head, but it hurt not the busy brain. Curious eyes may gaze upon the brown emblem of mortality, and note the vast length and strangely small depth of skull, and materialists may laugh at the exploded rhetoric of a loving son, that the very coffin which held the rare old thinker was by an alchemic touch turned into gold; but they who love our noble English literature well know that the boast has been fulfilled in regard to the best and undying portion of Sir

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rejects the only word by which they could have been described. The phrase is simple: 'sleeping in this coffin, by the dust of his alchemic body he transmuteth lead into gold,'—viz. renders the base metal precious by making it the repository of his honoured remains, and thus doing what the alchemists vainly pretended to do."

Thomas Browne, and that his thoughts, transmitted to paper, have indeed turned to something far nobler, more spiritual and imperishable than gold when received into the hearts of docile readers and teachable disciples.

GEORGE PSALMANAZAR.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

*Memoirs of * * * commonly known by the name of George Psalmanazar, a reputed native of Formosa, written by himself, in order to be published after his death, &c. &c.* He was the author of the "Jewish History," and "The Life of Christ in the Universal History" (added in MS. of the time on the title-page). Dublin, printed for J. Wilson, J. Exshaw, E. Watts, S. Cotter, J. Potts, and J. Williams. 1765.

An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa, an Island subject to the Emperor of Japan. Giving an Account of the Religion, Manners, Customs, &c. of the Inhabitants. Together with a relation of what happened to the author in his travels, &c. Second edition. *By George Psalmanaazaar, a native of the island, now in London. Adorned with cuts, to which are added a map and a figure of an idol, not in the former edition.* London, printed for Mat. Wotton, Abel Roper, and B. Lintot, in Fleet Street. 1705. Price 6*s*.

Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson, &c. By Sir John Hawkins, Knight, (Johnsoniana.) London, 1859.

Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson. By Mrs. Piozzi, (Johnsoniana). London, 1859.

Curiosities of Literature. By Isaac D'Israeli. A new edition, with Memoir and Notes, by his Son, the Right Hon. B. Disraeli. Vol. iii. (and note, vol. i.) London, 1859.

GEORGE PSALMANAZAR.

DR. YOUNG to an excellent poem has prefixed a telling title, "The Universal Passion, Love of Fame;" and he cites Juvenal's tenth satire, "that the thirst for Fame exceeds by far the thirst for virtue." Perhaps both of these satirists are, after all, somewhat in the wrong, although it is a bold thing to say. The love of Fame is a grand passion, too grand to be widely felt. It is the last infirmity of great minds, as Milton tells us. It combines in itself too many noble feelings to be universal; but what really is universal is that minor itching to be talked of and about—that wish to rise to sudden notoriety, that restless longing to become the head of a small circle, that small-beer ambition of being the chief in a parish, the leader in a deputation—in short, to be a notorious rather than a note-worthy man. All this, which is universal enough, may be put down rather to an ill-governed vanity than to a love of fame. The man who will be talked about does not much care whether his name be amongst the most

fraudulent of bankrupts or in the list of recipients of the Victoria Cross, published in the same Gazette. Perhaps, as a matter of safety, he would have preferred the latter, with the exception that he would have had previously to have exposed his precious body to an almost certain death. Even when enduring the punishment which his crime brings with it, the victim of a voracious vanity exults that his name is before the world. Mrs. Catharine Wilson was, we are told, particularly anxious to know what the papers said of her; it was the only anxiety she showed. Pullinger said that no one had excelled him in his gigantic fraud. Fauntleroy, a short time before he was executed, called for a glass, and when he saw the reflection of his face, was anxious that his portrait should not then be taken. "My God!" said he, "can this be the once handsome, the notorious Henry Fauntleroy?" And in our own time, the unctuous Sunday-school teacher Hocker, in reading some notes after his condemnation, remarked that "he was not then the gay young man which the world had known him." In short, there are very few foolishly bad men who could not be adduced as examples of this hungry vanity, or, as Wickliff and Chaucer would more properly call it, vain-glory.

Forgers of manuscripts and literary impostors are especially the dupes of this vain-glory; and we are about to glance over one of the most extraordinary examples—namely, George Psalmanazar, the pretended native of Formosa; a man whose real name, so far as we can learn, is still buried in obscurity—who, himself learned for the

age in which he lived, deceived some of the best scholars of his time, and died at an advanced age, a true penitent, and a useful member of society. Whatever may have been his name, George was born somewhere about the year 1650, and in Europe. His parents' names, and the place of his birth, he concealed, for a very good reason, whilst he was pretending to be a native of Formosa; and for a still better, when he became a repentant man. He never divulged them, lest his sin and folly should bring disgrace on his family. We presume him to have been a native of Switzerland, or the South of France. "Out of Europe," he says, "I was not born, nor educated, nor even travelled, nor even went further northward than the Rhine in Germany, or Yorkshire in England." He was suspected of being a German, a Swede, or a Dane, nay, even an Englishman; but he denied that he was a native of any of these countries. His parents were Roman Catholics, but somewhat biassed in favour of Protestantism, which would seem to argue that they lived where Protestantism existed. His mother was a pious good woman, but before he was five years old he left her, and was taken many miles away by a Franciscan monk to be educated. This monk, who did not know much, recognised George's capacities, put him into a high class, pushed him forward, and, indeed, found that the boy possessed great talent in acquiring languages, and a tremendous ambition to excel.

As he increased in years, our hero fell into the hands most fitted to teach him to deceive. Taught by a Dominican, he was well versed in all the subtleties of Thomas

Aquinas; he soon found, like many other boys in those days, that he knew more than his masters; and at last, dazed with the philosophy of Aquinas, he left his teachers, and came to a great city, where he was welcomed and made much of, and learned to use his edged tools of argument. Determining to employ these, and pushed on by ambition, he began to read the Roman Catholic theology, with which he soon got disgusted, and proceeded to Avignon to take the place of a tutor. Here he met with a hypocritical priest, who proved to him that many of the clergy no more believed in the doctrines of their Church than they did in the Grand Lhama of Thibet. The people were poor, the priests dissolute, and the honest Lutherans whom he met in the country and small towns very badly off; their "priests," as he calls them, being forced to keep small cabarets—some, no doubt, for mere subsistence, others, perhaps, as a pretence to get their followers to meet them under the cloak of going to a public-house. The young scholar found much distress and misery about, and discovered that it was, indeed, hard to rise in the world, either by talent or learning. He had no influence and little patience, and he resolved to try his fortunes in the world in a different way. He visited his parents, and, upon leaving them, determined to assume the character of an Irish pilgrim, who had been maltreated and turned out of England for his religion. With a long staff and a black gown the pretended pilgrim left home with rather a heavy heart. His direct route lay past the very university where he had studied theology; and he necessarily, therefore, turned out of the way. The road he took,

although "a considerable high road," contained objects not calculated to reassure him, and its description may be quoted as exhibiting the state of the Continent at that time: "Now and then, at some lonely place, lay the carcass of a man rotting and stinking on the ground by the wayside, with a rope about his neck, which was fastened to a post about two or three yards distant; and there were the bodies of highwaymen, or rather of soldiers, sailors, mariners, or even galley-slaves, disbanded after the peace of Ryswick, who, having neither home nor occupation, used to infest the roads in troops, plunder towns and villages, and when taken were hanged at the county town by dozens, or even scores sometimes, after which, their bodies were thus exposed along the highway, *in terrorem*. At other places one met with crosses, either of wood or stone, the highest not above two or three feet, with inscriptions to this purport: 'Pray for the soul of A.B., or, of a stranger who was found murdered near this spot.'"* So that Callot's wild pictures of the *Miseries of War*, wherein the trees bear the most plenteous crop of hanging ruffians that can be imagined, are true enough. Nay, even the exaggerated atrocities depicted in the modern illustrations of Gustave Doré are not by many shades too black. These "deterring objects" made our pilgrim associate himself with many people on the

* Perhaps as fine a *quasi* contemporary picture as ever was drawn—and Thackeray excelled in the art of local and time colouring—is a picture somewhat similar to this and other passages in Psalmanazar, in the "Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, Esq.," one of Thackeray's earliest and best books.

road; and, as an illustration of his vanity, it may be remarked that he never once begged whilst his little store of money lasted, but spent that recklessly, like a gentleman, till the exigencies of the case threw him again on the public. At Lyons, where he hopes to meet with a harvest, an officer asks him whether he wants a *viaticum*, and George, not knowing the consequences of refusal, simply answers "yes;" whereon the officer "claps twopence in his hand, and walks him about the city, seeing many grand objects, to observe which he was not allowed to linger." At last he came to the opposite gate, whereat the officer pointing told him to take himself off, for there was his journey; if he came back he would be punished. Plainly, therefore, the good people of Lyons were quite awake to the merits of pilgrims, real or pretended, and struck a balance between charity and severity by providing them with a *viaticum* of twopence, and showing them the door as quickly as possible. Our pilgrim was in great fear whether or no this conduct would be repeated at every great city, but he found that this was not the case. Sometimes he fared well, and even sumptuously; he danced with beggars at fairs, and enjoyed himself in his wild way, for he was yet but a young man, and one cannot read his very dry, and somewhat sorrowful narrative, without having the love of adventure stirred within one, and determining to follow Mr. Collins's example, to take a "cruise upon wheels."

It is but fair to the impostor to state that, every now and then, he seems to be filled with sorrow and trouble for what he has done. The path of the most successful

roguery is, after all, not a path of roses. All around the pretender was evidently an atmosphere of religious humbug, relieved only now and then by some bright spots, and these few and far between. If he saw one of these, he was led to regret that he ever passed himself off as an Irish Papist; and when questioned on his sufferings, he is led to invent them. Dirt and low company had, besides, inflicted on him that disease which, in the time of John Wilkes, was popularly supposed to be natural with Scotchmen, and from this he can by no means escape. A Dutch officer at Liege engages him for some little time as a kind of general servitor and minor bully at a gaming-house, one also of general entertainment; and, to make him do credit to the virtuous establishment, has him bled, physicked, bathed, and scrubbed, but to no purpose. The "scabious disease" still clings to him. In one particular it is absolutely beneficial to him. About Liege there was a kind of pretended Beguin nuns,* who assumed that sacred habit merely for the sake of being procuresses to the fine, idle ladies of the town, the virtue of these fair Liegoises being evidently that of the ladies of the Count of Grammont, or of the dames described by M. Le Comte Bussy Rabutin; and, as our pilgrim or servitor was a good-looking young fellow, these "pretended Beguines" often made overtures to him, which were, of course, cut short by a nearer inspection of his hands and skin. The life with the Dutch officer at last proves hateful to him,

* He speaks well of the real "Beguines," as he calls them, and says that they were noted for prayerfulness and charity.

and he escapes from him, and flies from the "seeming grandeur" of his house, and joins some soldiers, with whom he learns to drink, swear, dice, and fight.

Having still an ear for curious learning, he one day listens to some Jesuit priests, who are talking of Japan, India, and China, the wondrous Insula Formosa, and the ravishing islands of the East. It is now impossible to realize the wild ideas which the bare mention of these unknown lands stirred up in the hearts of the hearers. The bombastic Pistol, when he wishes greatly to interest his audience, does not hesitate to "speak of Africa and golden joys." As every countryman, before the days of stage-coaches, used to credit the hyperbolical expression that London streets were paved with gold, so, to the Western mind, the vision opened up by the name of the East was truly gorgeous. George felt this, and, had he loved Fame truly, he would have gone thither; as he was only inflated by vainglory, he commenced forming his scheme of deception. He carefully treasured up what he had heard, and, knowing that he could not learn the language, undertook the immense task of making one. He invented names for the letters of his alphabet, formed upon it a new nomenclature, divided the year into twenty months, and laid the foundation of his imposture.

In the meantime, some monks with whom he is wish to use him as a tool, and beg him to become "converted" —he was then a swearing soldier. "They took me," he says, "to a Capuchin of some piety who had been apprised of the intended visit and the purport of it. When we came

to the monastery, we found the good old Capuchin sitting on the bench, in an outer room of it, facing the gate, with a lusty young woman kneeling before him, barking like a dog, and making a great many other antic postures and noises; upon which I was told that she was possessed, and that the good father was exorcising the evil spirit out of her. Whether she was sent there on purpose or not, I know not; but I remember to have seen her at some processions, and once or twice in church, in the same unaccountable attitudes."

The power of face or of faith that these good priests were possessed of must have been immense. How could it have failed to have happened that, tickled by some gross part of their own humbug, both possessed and exorcist did not burst into a long and loud fit of uncontrollable laughter? Surely, if such was not sometimes the case, hypocrisy must have driven away, as it always does, the Divine Spirit of Humour, which in this world is one of its most skilful and dreaded opponents.

Arrested, after again wandering at the gate of the town, George finds an officer who takes a liking to him, and to him and upon him he first puts forth his grand lie. "He passed with him," he writes, "as a Japonese and a heathen, and was entered in his company under the name of Salamanazar, which since my coming to England I have altered by a letter or two, to make it somewhat different from that mentioned in the Book of Kings,* but whether

* 2 Kings c. xvii. v. 3—The King of Assyria who subdued Hoshea. "And he (Hoshea) did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the Kings of Israel that were before him

my new captain believed or not what I told him, I was a great favourite with him." The officer was a Colonel Lauder, of the garrison of Sluys, and George, who had been more than once a soldier, and knew how to trail a pike, enlisted; still, however, pretending to be a Formosan native born, and once a bitter hater of Christianity, but since converted by the Jesuits. The simple Scotch Colonel appears to have believed all; but amongst his officers was a chaplain of the name of Innes, a man utterly unprincipled, and desirous of escaping from his position and gaining preferment in the Church. This man, as acute as he was unprincipled, detected the imposture at an early stage; but, nevertheless, persuaded his Colonel to take George Psalmanazar to London and to introduce him to the learned there as a precious convertite.

Here, then, was the crucial experiment, and the genius of the impostor for a long time carried him through it successfully. He affected strange habits. He threw himself on the pity of men. He declared that his love for our holy religion had caused him to undergo unheard-of cruelties, and afterwards to fly from his native land. And thus in his false narrative does he account for his conversion, which Innes, who had suspected the imposition all along, forced him to make so that the convert might thereby increase the popularity of the Rev. Mr. Innes.

"Being thus (to my eternal Happiness I hope) con-

Against him came up Shalmaneser, King of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant and gave him presents." The impostor's way of spelling the name looks even more Assyrian than this way.

vinc'd of the truth of the Christian Religion, and being thorowly satisfied of the primitive purity of the Church of *England*, I earnestly desir'd to be a Member of that Communion. Then the Ministers who unsuccessfully disputed with me gave out, that my good Guide Mr. *Innes* did not convert me by strength of Arguments, but by large promises, or some other indirect means, which God knows is false. To stop these uncharitable reports, Mr. *Innes* and I went to Mr. *Hattinga* (the eldest Minister of *Sluyse*) and desired him to call a Consistory, and publickly examine me about the reasonableness of my Conversion. Mr. *Hattinga* promis'd there should be a Consistory at seven of the Clock that Evening. Accordingly Mr. *Innes* and I went again at that hour and found the Consistory sitting; it was compos'd of the two *Dutch* and one *French* Minister, the rest of the members were Wine-sellers, Apothecaries and other Tradesmen; hither also my Collonel, Captain, and the Captain-Lieutenant came to hear me; but because I could not very readily express my self in *Dutch* (and none of them understood Latin, except Mr. *Hattinga*, and he indeed knew very little of it) they chose Monsieur *D'Amalvy*, the *French* Minister, to discourse me in *French*; who said to me, 'Sir, the whole Consistory in general, and I in particular, rejoyce to see you resolv'd to be baptiz'd into the Christian Church, but I hope your conversion doth not proceed from any other motive than a true and conscientious Conviction.'

"Mr. *Innes* and I both thought that this speech did not savour much of Charity; and therefore I reply'd, 'Sir, I

came hither on purpose to declare the Reasons of my Conversion, if the Consistory please to hear me.' Then we were ordered to withdraw; and being called in, Monsieur *D'Amalvy* told me, 'That indeed they were very glad to see me so desirous to embrace Christianity, but that it was a little too soon for me to give an account of my Conversion: You should (says he) converse with us for three Weeks or a Month, and then we will publickly baptize you in our Great Church, where a rational account of your conversion may be much to the edification of the Congregation.' But I perceiving their design answer'd, 'If it be not too soon for you to hear me, I am sure it is time for me to speak, I am thorowly convinc'd of the Truth of the Christian Religion, and am not willing the initiating Sacrament of Baptism should be long deferr'd; wherefore if you think it not fit to hear me now, you must not take it amiss if I make all the haste I can to obtain the blessing of Baptism, whereby *I may be made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.*' Then they again desir'd us to withdraw, and when we came in, they advis'd me to follow their directions before given, and that they had nothing to add. So we took our leaves of them; and in my way home, I agreed Mr. *Innes* should baptize me, without taking any more notice of the *Consistory*. But they, mistrusting what we intended, went to Brigadier Lauder (the Governour of Sluyse) and told him, that 'since Mr. *Innes* is of a different Communion from what is establish'd in our Country, he ought not to Baptise the Convert.' The Brigadier reply'd, 'I am no Bishop, neither will I

meddle with Church-Affairs; however, I will send for this *Formosan*, and if he will consent, one of you shall baptize him.' Accordingly I was sent for and ask'd whether I would be baptiz'd by one of these Ministers? I reply'd, 'Had I been, or if I intended to be, a Member of their Communion, then I would desire Baptism from their Hands; but since Mr. *Innes* was the only Guide to whom I ow'd my Conversion, I hoped he might be allow'd to baptize me.' The Dutch Ministers answer'd, 'You say well, but the laws of our Country will not permit it.' To which I reply'd, 'Tis true I don't understand your Laws, but had the *Jews* of this place converted me to *Judaism*, I can't think you would have circumcis'd me.' Thus finding they could not prevail, they went away, telling Mr. *Innes* that they would complain to the States of Holland. A little while after came Deputies from the States to view our Garrison and Fortification; then the complaint was made that Mr. *Innes, a Minister of the Church of England, had taken the liberty there to baptize a Pagan* that he had converted: But their Highnesses only smil'd at the Complaint.

"In the mean while the Chaplain of our Regiment hearing of the contest thought to put an end to it, by saying to the Brigadier, 'Sir, I have one favour to beg of you, that you would please to hinder your Chaplain from Baptizing the *Formosan* he has converted, for that privilege no man can claim but my self, because I am Chaplain to the Regiment. But my Captain being present reply'd, 'You are our Chaplain and the Convert my Soldier, but

since (to your shame) you never attempted to convert him, I see no reason why you should baptize him.' Upon this the Chaplain went in a pet to the Collonel and desir'd him to imprison me. 'Why,' answer'd the Collonel, 'what evil has he done?' 'None that I know of,' reply'd the Chaplain, 'but I would have him so confined that nobody might speak to him but my self, for the Brigadier's Chaplain who converted him intends to baptize him, which would be a reproach to me.' But my Collonel was so far from complying with his request, that he told him 'He was an ignorant young man and knew not what he ask'd; for says he, I would much rather Mr. *Innes* should baptize him than give offence to a new convert by such scandalous practises.'

"So at last all obstacles being remov'd, by the grace of God, at about seven of the clock in the Evening, in the *French* Church, some of our officers and some of the Burghers being present, the Honourable Brigadier *Lauder* was my God-father and desir'd I might be christen'd by the name of *George*.

"The next day I set about writing the Grounds and reasons of my Conversion to Christianity, the Objections I made, and the convincing solutions I received from Mr. *Innes* to bring me with him into *England*, in order to send me to the most celebrated University of *Oxford*; as soon as my good Guide made this known, my God-father gave me a man out of his own Company to serve in my room and I was discharg'd; the officers and the Consistory giving me the following Testimonium; the Original any

Man shall see that will give himself the trouble to come and see me:—

NOUS soussignés certifions que *George Psalmanazaar*, Natif de ville nommé la *Belle Isle*, dans la *Japon*, le quel a servi dans le Regiment de Bockguhall pendant quelque tems, s'est converti à la Religion Chrétienne & en est redevable aux soins & aux Instructions de Monsieur *Innes*, Aumônier du Regiment de *Lauder;* Dieu aïant béni ses justes desseins, le dit *George* a renoncé très sincèrement à l'Idolatrie Païenne pour croire en *Jésus Christ* nostre Redempteur.

Depuis la Conversion il a vécu comme un bon Chrétien doit vivre, & a edifié par sa bonne conduite tout ceux qui en ont été témoins.

Nous donc aïant reconnu en lui une droiture de Coeur, & beaucoup d'autres qualités qui le rendent recommandable, prions tous les gens de bien de lui donner les secours dont il pourra à avoir besoin dans la Créance que nous avons qu'il sera de toutes les manières un digne Membre de l'Eglise de Jésus Christ. *Fait à l'Ecluse le* 23 *de Mai*, 1703.

WE *whose names are underwritten do certify*, That George Psalmanaazaar, *a Native of the Isle called* Formosa *near* Japan, *and who has for some time been a soldier in the Regiment of* Buchwald, *is now converted to the Christian Religion* by the Charitable care and instruction of Mr. Innes, *Chaplain to the Regiment of* Lauder, *God having so blessed his just designs, that the said* George *with all sincerity hath renounced his Pagan Idolatry and believed in* Jesus Christ *our Redeemer.*

And that since his Conversion he hath behaved himself like a good Christian, and that his example has been edifying to all who have seen him.

We then observing his Integrity and many other of his good qualities, think him worthy to be recommended to all good people, and we pray them to succour and assist him in all his necessities, hoping that he will always be a true member of the Church of Christ. Dated at *Sluyse* the 23rd of May, 1703.

Sign'd and Seal'd by

D'Buchwald, Collonel, *De Vandeuil*, Lieutenant-Collonel, *W. F. Warnsdoff*, Major. *G. Lauder*, Brigadier, *Abdias Hattinga*, Minister of Sluyse, in the name of the Consistory."

The Bishop of London, to whom he was introduced, believed all he said, and in pitying zeal extended both notice and protection to the fugitive. Innes, we believe, was re-

warded. By favour of the Bishop of Oxford, convenient apartments were prepared at that University, so that Psalmanazar might improve himself in his studies. He drew up in Latin an account of the island of Formosa, a not very inconsistent and entertaining work, which was translated, passed through the press, had a rapid sale, and was quoted without suspicion by Buffon and other more popular naturalists.

To keep up the sham, Psalmanazar, as we may now call him, burnt candles in his rooms all night, slept in an arm-chair, not in his bed, ate roots and herbs, and drank only water, and was, perhaps, much more Japanese, in the English idea, than the Japanese themselves. His genius for imposture, and his immense memory, saved him for a long time from detection, although the keen scepticism of Doctors Halley, Mead, and Woodward, and the exceeding regularity and western style of his grammar, called down virulent and earnest denunciations of the imposition, and caused the learned to battle amongst themselves. In excuse of the Bishops and others who were deceived, it must be remembered that Japan was a *terra incognita*, and that what was known of it, Psalmanazar had picked up and embodied in his account. He came back from Oxford to London with a version of the Church Catechism "in his native tongue," which was examined, and by the learned of the time pronounced to be—as it was—a real language, regular, grammatical, and capable of great eloquence and beauty. He placed the order of letters very differently from our own, but it is significant that his

alphabet forms a jargon easy to be remembered, and that the first letter of each name is our actual letter; thus Am, Mem, Neu, Taph, Lamdo, Samdo, Vomera, Bagdo, Pedlo, are A, M, N, T, L, S, V, B, and P. The figures of these signs, of which there are only twenty, are partly like Hebrew, and partly formed like Uncial letters, probably haphazard. He translated the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, while the Rev. Mr. Innes must have grinned a satiric approval of the subjects chosen for translation. So strong was Psalmanazar's memory that he baffled the ordinary methods of detection. He would translate, *vivâ voce*, a long list of English words, and when these were marked down, it is said, without his knowledge, he would affix the same terms to them three, six, or even twelve months afterwards. A greater effort of memory has, perhaps, never been heard of. At the full tide of success he gained both money and notoriety; and one of his contemporaries hints that he led an extravagant, and, sometimes, even an immoral life; of such, however, we have little proof.

It is now known that the Rev. Chaplain of Lauder's regiment had found him tripping in his vocabulary, and thus discovered his imposture. Doctors Meade, Halley, and others did not cease in their attacks; but it is doubtful whether or not they would have prevailed. Innes, who knew all about his imposture, was the one who pulled the strings of the puppet. This man, who more resembles the villainous chaplains of Fielding, Hogarth, and Congreve than an English clergyman, had made Psalmanazar his

tool. Taking a passage of Cicero's "*De Natura Deorum*," he made George translate it into Formosan, and then after some days read it into Latin. The plan of Psalmanazar was unripe, and his dismay assured the cleric, who afterwards made use of him; by his introduction he was made Chaplain General to the Forces in Portugal, a place wherein he indulged his "inveterate passion for wine and women." On his return to England he found Psalmanazar reformed and the public tired of him. Dr. Innes —his degree had been obtained of a Scotch University— then quietly appropriated a work of some merit, called "A modest Inquiry after Moral Virtue," which one might fancy a racy satire on such a man, and on the strength of the book obtained, from the Bishop of London, the living of Braintree, in Essex. The real author of the "Inquiry," an "Episcopal Clergyman of Scotland," finding out the fraud, made Dr. Innes disgorge the "copy money" of the book, and write an apology; after which, *exit* Innes from these memoirs, living quietly at his illgotten living at Braintree, and, it is to be hoped, reforming.

The Romanists, as George Psalmanazar was of the Anglican creed, went virulently against him, but others as warmly defended him. Advertisements in his favour were published in the "London Gazette;" but in the meantime the impostor had become no longer one. He withdrew from life, became penitent upon reading Law's "Serious Call," and withdrew from society, not so much discovered and disgraced, as that he gradually dropped out of the view of the public.

When Psalmanazar at last fully awoke to a full consciousness of his degraded position, he was only thirty-two years of age, and he lived upwards of fifty years after that; and, so far as we can judge, during all that time he was a penitent man. He, at least, never paraded his penitence, but supported himself by writing for the booksellers; and as those gentry did not pay their poor hacks very heavily, he must have had much difficulty in keeping body and soul together. Yet he never seems to have complained. He worked on periodical publications from seven in the morning till seven at night, drinking nothing but tea, and a little weak punch as soon as he left off writing; was employed in the dry and laborious undertaking of a universal history, to execute which he conscientiously fitted himself, learning Hebrew, translating the Psalms, consulting various libraries, and, above all, saving his employers more than a hundred pounds in books by reading at Sion College; and, although he did not openly confess his imposture, it is said he often owned it to his friends with sighs and tears. He had made other pretences, which perhaps irritated his medical opponents—these he also confessed. He pretended to heal himself of the gout by laudanum, yet he confesses he "had not the least tendency thereto;" he took opium, and said that he had a secret method of stripping it of its pernicious effects by acids, "particularly the juice of Seville oranges." All these rogueries he rehearses in his last will and testament, published with his life after his death, in which he speaks of himself as "a poor, weak, sinful, and worthless creature, commonly known as George

Psalmanazar." He only once attempts to excuse himself, and that weakly:—"I was, in some measure, unavoidably led into the base and shameful posture of passing myself off as a native of Formosa, and a convert to Christianity, all of which was hatched out of my own brain, without regard to truth and honesty." Finally, he says, "I desire to be buried in the common burial-ground, in some obscure corner of it, in the lowest and cheapest manner, without coffin; laid in the earth, with nothing to hinder it from covering me all round." Such stand as his last words. As we read them we cannot but believe him to have been a sincere penitent; and, whilst we abhor his deception, we must yet be struck with the originality and boldness of its conception, and the vast acquirements which it called forth, and the tact, cleverness, and nerve which the deceiver exhibited.

His will is dated "Ironmonger Row, in the parish of St. Luke's, Middlesex, April 23, 1752, O. S.," and in the seventy-third year of the writer's age. It was about this time that Dr. Johnson knew him and often visited him. "When I asked," says Mrs. Piozzi, "who was the *best* man he had ever known, Dr. Johnson replied unexpectedly, 'Psalmanazar.' He said also, that, 'though a native of France, he possessed more of the English language than any one of the other foreigners who had fallen in his way.'" Piozzi adds that Psalmanazar's "pious and patient endurance of a tedious illness, ending in an exemplary death, confirmed the strong impression his merit had made on Dr. Johnson." "It is so very difficult," said he, "for a sick

man *not* to be a scoundrel. Oh, set the pillows soft, here is Mr. Grumbler a-coming. Ah! let no air in for the world, Mr. Grumbler will be here presently."

Mrs. Piozzi imagines that Psalmanazar had studied, adorned, and disgraced many religions, forgetting that the Formosan faith was quite a creature of his own brain, just as much as the religion of the inhabitants of Utopia was imagined by More, and that of Atlantis by Lord Bacon.

From "Knight Hawkins," as Carlyle has it, we have another glimpse of Psalmanazar, as well as a proof of the exceeding delicacy of feeling of Dr. Johnson, which, in spite of his brusquerie to fine ladies and beaux, must have kept him always a gentleman. He, the doctor, said he had *never* seen the close of the life of any one that he wished so much his own to resemble as that of Psalmanazar, for its purity and devotion. He told many anecdotes of him, and said that he supposed him, by his accent, to have been a Gascon; "but that he spoke English with the city accent, and coarse enough." He for some years used to smoke his pipe and spend his evenings at a public-house near Old Street, where many people, and among them Dr. Johnson, who was admitted to his private friendship, went to see him. When the Doctor was asked if he had ever contradicted him, he said, "I should as soon thought of contradicting a bishop." When he was asked if he had ever mentioned Formosa before him, the Doctor exhibited that fine feeling we allude to, and said, "Sir, I was unwilling, I was afraid even to mention China."

It was on one of Johnson's visits to this interesting old man that, having adjourned to the public-house club, the Doctor took occasion, probably speaking of the acquirement of the Hebrew tongue, and much various learning by Psalmanazar, to remark, that the "human mind had a necessary tendency to improvement, and that it would frequently *anticipate instruction* and enable ingenious minds to acquire knowledge." "'Sir,' said a master tailor sitting by, 'that I deny; I have had many apprentices, but never one that could make a coat till I had taken great pains in teaching him." This objection to his dogmatic and rather vapourish assertion must have struck Johnson, for he mentioned it many years afterwards to Sir John Hawkins.

The will of Psalmanazar is dated, as we have seen, from Ironmonger Row, 1752. Ten years afterwards he ratified it in these terms, being then in expectation of a speedy release from this world:—"January 1, 1762, being the day of the Circumcision of our Divine Lord, then, blessed be God, quite sound in my mind, but weak in my body, I do ratify and confirm the above particulars of my last will made." A few days after this he died, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and so calmly that all who witnessed his dissolution were at once edified and awe-struck. A strange ending; strange, because happily so much at variance with the beginning of his life.

THE HIGHWAYMAN—REAL AND IDEAL.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

The Life of John Everett, who kept the Cock Tavern, in Fleet Street, and was executed at Tyburn, 20th February, 1729. Written by Himself. London, 1730.

Eugene Aram: An Unfinished Tragedy. By Bulwer. 1849.

The Chronicles of Crime; or, the New Newgate Calendar. By Camden Pelham, of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-law. London, W. Tegg, 1851.

Rookwood: A Romance. By William Harrison Ainsworth. London, 1857.

Paul Clifford. By Sir E. L. Bulwer. London, 1862.

THE HIGHWAYMAN—REAL AND IDEAL.

NOTHING is at once so vulgar, so pernicious, or so outrageous in its results as imagination without taste. When combined, the most delightful works will be the result; when separate, we can only expect falsehood, exaggeration, and the horribly grotesque, as well as too frequently that which is simply vicious. To Fancy, combined with taste, we may trace Milton's "Allegro" and "Penseroso," Shakespeare's "Tempest," Puck, Ariel, and a thousand delightful creations—the best works of the painter, the purest forms and idealisms of the sculptor. To the same power, uninformed, we owe the ghastly fancies of the Spanish painters, the grotesque vulgar caricatures of the Germans; we also owe to it the circumstance that with us murder is treated as one of the Fine Arts, and that thieves, highwaymen, common burglars, footpads, and prostitutes are elevated into the heroes and heroines of romance. We hardly know whether to pity or blame the authors of such books: where Nature has stayed her hand

and left out due knowledge, we must commiserate their condition; if, on the other hand, they were capable of better, and turned it to the worse simply on account of vulgar taste, we hold that they are greatly to be condemned. We hear of one author who, very rightly, will not permit his own books to enter his own house; and if others have any conscience, surely their old age will be made miserable by remembering that they have used the precious moments of their youth in inditing not a good matter, but a contemptible fiction, which the further it penetrates the more deeply will it corrupt.

This worship of highwaymen, for instance, once all the rage, is a modern invention, and proceeded from one of the most conceited and foolish of brains. We shall not argue upon the matter, because we have only to place the real and ideal side by side to show that the writer is as foolish as false. Take honest Henry Fielding from the shelf, and people will find in his day, at least, the robber was painted in his true colours as a ruffian of the lowest type—of too low a calibre for any but the most brutal passions and the most vulgar selfishness. But take "Paul Clifford" or "Jack Shephard," the creations of more modern brains, in hand; we shall find that these low wretches are gifted with the sentimental feelings of the hero of romance, and often ejaculate sentences worthy of the cynic philosophy of a Rochefoucauld or a Chesterfield.*

* Thus, for instance, in Bulwer's romance, which in his mature, or rather more than mature age, he has determinately defended, we find a highwayman speaking in the high-polite style.

The true hero of Mr. Ainsworth's "Rookwood" is Richard Turpin, and all the art of the writer is spent upon describing the celebrated ride to York and the equally wonderful Black Bess. In the Valhalla of highwaymen, Dick is permitted to share an immortality with this fine horse, and finds, like Pope's Indian, that—

> admitted to that equal sky,
> His faithful mare shall bear him company.

Dick, too, has much of the kingly bearing and magnanimity of the hero, and when, after saving him by her fleetness, his mare dies, he weeps like a man of true feeling.

"Dick's eyes were blinded as with rain. His triumph, though achieved, was forgotten, his own safety disregarded. He stood weeping and swearing like one beside himself.

"'And art thou gone, Bess?' cried he, in a voice of agony, lifting up his courser's head, and kissing her lips, covered with bloodflecked foam. 'Gone, gone! and I have killed the best steed that I ever crossed! And for what?' added Dick, beating his brow with his clenched hand—'for what? for what?'"

The illustrious author himself has told us how he felt when he wrote that celebrated passage. The feelings of Gibbon at Lausanne, after having written the last line of his *magnum opus*, were small compared with those of Ainsworth. After informing the public on the important point where he "achieved" this—at the Elms at Kilburn—he continues:—"Well do I remember the fever into which I was thrown during the time of composition. My pen literally *scoured* over the pages. So

thoroughly did I identify myself with the flying highwayman, that once started I found it impossible to halt. Animated by kindred enthusiasm, I cleared every object in my path with as much facility as Turpin disposed of the impediments that beset his flight. In his company, I mounted the hill-side, dashed through the bustling village, swept over the desolate heath, threaded the silent street, plunged into the eddying stream, and kept an onward course—without pause, without hindrance, without fatigue. With him *I shouted, sang, laughed, exulted, wept.* Nor did I retire to rest till, in imagination, I heard the bell of York Minster toll forth the knell of poor Black Bess."

This is fine writing, "a'most too fine," as the muffin-loving law stationer of Cook's court, so admirably described by Dickens, would say. It is to be hoped that all popular authors are not thrown into such ecstasies, or their landladies would simply wait, like Dick Swiveller's landlady, outside their doors from five in the morning till half-past eight to give them warning when they came out. It is a pity, too, to spoil such fine writing by declaring that Turpin never rode to York, and that Black Bess never existed, save in the brain of the penny chap-book from which the great author probably obtained the creation. Let us see what the really dashing highwayman was. We must, in deference to space, ask our readers to call on their memories for the picture of the ideal. We quote from the "New Newgate Calendar," a trustworthy compilation by a Barrister of the Inner Temple, for that of the real highwayman.

Turpin, says this gentleman, "was a petty pilferer, a heartless plunderer, a brutal murderer;" he was the son of an Essex farmer, and early distinguished himself for the brutality of his disposition. Apprenticed to a butcher, he set up in that trade, and his earliest known essays in dishonesty were those of stealing his neighbours' cattle, cutting them up, and thus underselling his rivals. The servants of Mr. Giles, of Plaistow, having by watching discovered him stealing two oxen, obtained a warrant for him; but his wife giving him notice, he escaped from the back door while the officers were detained at his front. His wife then furnished him with money, and he hid in the hundreds of Essex, joining gangs of poachers and smugglers, and often brutally illtreating his faithful wife. His brave companions—the Zoroaster, Jerry Juniper, and other rufflers, with the Knight of Malta ("to his side was girt a long and doughty sword, which he termed, in knightly phrase, Excalibur," &c.)—were a set of poor cowardly rogues whose bold plan was for one of them to knock at the doors of lone houses, ask for charity, and then the whole troop, rushing in, would rob and abuse the helpless inmates. Old men and women were Turpin's especial victims. One old woman at Loughton "he threatened to set on the fire if she did not make immediate discovery (of her gold). She refused to give the desired information, on which the villain actually placed her on the fire, where he held her till the tormenting flames compelled her to discover her hidden treasure." This was above four hundred pounds. Murder, arson, and rape were frequently committed by this gang; and, having made the county too hot

for him, Turpin stole a horse, and took to the road. Here he met with Tom King, with whom he robbed in concert, and of whom he is represented in romance as the fast friend, whilst King is the *fidus Achates* of the Æneas of the road. But we cannot too often refute the foolish old saw of there being honour amongst thieves. King being arrested, and crying out for help, Turpin deliberately shot his friend, so that he should not "peach" (give information against him). "Dick," cried King, thinking that the shot was meant for the officer, "you have killed me." Nevertheless, he lived for a week, and long enough to give information of his friend's hiding-place at Hackney-Marsh. Turpin then, to use the euphuism of this historian, "removed into Yorkshire," where he supported himself by a cunning mixture of horse stealing and horse dealing. Taken at last under his assumed name of John Palmer, found out by a returned letter, of which he had not paid the postage, he was tried, condemned, and executed. Finely as they dress this hero on the stage, he was so shabbily dressed —no sticking-plaster boots, silver-hilted swords, gold-laced hats, or velvet coats—that he bought "a new pair of pumps and a fustian frock to wear at the time of his death." He left a ring and some other articles to a "married woman," not his wife, with whom he had been cohabiting, trembled and turned white when he came to the ladder, stamped his foot with some bravado, mounted the ladder, and there "conversed with the executioner for half an hour before he threw himself off."

> **Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,**
> **And often took leave, but seemed loath to depart.**

We find we have made the trifling omission of a murder and a round dozen of brutalities in this short sketch, but such trifles are of little moment in the life of a hero. "It is needless to add that the story of the ride to York," writes the barrister, with some contempt, "and of the wondrous deeds of the highwayman's steed, Black Bess, are like many other tales of this fellow (!), the fabrications of *some poetical brain.*"

That Turpin was but the ordinary highwayman, a vulgar fellow, who lived in constant dread of being taken by the thief-catcher, and who generally went to the gallows bewailing his hard fate, and repenting of "burnt brandy and bad women," as the facetious Thomas Brown puts it, will be next shown by our extracts from the life of Mr. John Everett, wherein we see, to quote Thackeray's "Irish Sketch Book," speaking of Freeny, a notorious Irish footpad, "the exceeding inconvenience as well as hazard of the heroic highwayman's life, which a certain Ainsworth, in company with a certain Cruikshank, have (has) represented as so poetic and brilliant, so prodigal of delightful adventure, so adorned with champagne, gold lace, and brocade."

The gold lace and brocade, we may here remark, fade away altogether in the criminal trials, where copper-headed whips, tarnished silvered lace, and brass-hilted hangers purchased at Monmouth Street, adorn the thieves not much longer than a theatrical suit is worn by a stage highwayman. Even these poor suits, which rendered the vulgar faces and figures of the thieves all the more hideous, were

soon exchanged for the old wig worth "about twopence," the rug coat or wrap-rascal, the old shoes and hayband stockings, in which they perpetrated their robberies. Mr. Everett was a soldier, he had "listed in the Foot-Guards of my Lord Albemarle's company, as a precaution against misfortune." Whilst there, he met with a companion, Richard Bird, and they agreed to desert and take to the road. One of their many adventures was to "stop a coach in the evening on Hounslow heath, in which, amongst other passengers, were two precise but courageous Quakers, who had the assurance to call us sons of violence, and, refusing to comply with our reasonable demands, jumped out of the coach to give battle, whereon we began a sharp engagement, and showed them that the arm of flesh was too strong for the spirit, which seemed to move very powerfully within them. After a sharp contest they submitted. . . . . As they were stout fellows, and men every inch of them, we scorned to abuse them, but contented ourselves with rifling them of the mammon of unrighteousness which they had about them, which amounted to thirty or forty shillings, and their watches. There was a circumstance in this affair which created a little diversion. The precisians for the most part, though they are plain in their dress, wear the best of commodities, and though a smart toupee is an abomination, yet a bob or a natural of six or seven guineas' price is the modest covering allowed by the saints. One of the prigs was well furnished in this particular; and flattering myself it would become me, I resolved to make it lawful plunder. Without further ceremony than alleging that exchange was no rob-

bery, *I napped his poll* and dressed him in masquerade with an old black tie which I had purchased the day before of an antiquated Chelsea pensioner for half-a-crown. The other company, though in the doleful dumps for the loss of the coriander seed, could not forbear grinning at the metamorphosis; for our Quaker looked more like a devil than a saint."

After this, and "tipping" the coachman and guard (too often confederates) a "twelver to drink their healths," the highwaymen brushed off. Everett, after several adventures, was apprehended, and remained three years in prison. He was even promoted to be turnkey, but he left this profession to keep a thieves' alehouse, and to make up his brewer's bill again took to the road, purchasing "a brace of pistols, a hanger, a red rug coat, and a hat with a cock and a copper edging." Although he had "a nag that would fly like a hare and leap like a greyhound," he was taken at his first job, robbing a chariot with two ladies in it,—"the husband and miss's sweetheart," who were behind, pursuing him. He was condemned and hung, and confesses, naïvely enough, all his guilt, especially one "*wilful perjuration.*"

"'I had,' says this gallant soldier, 'for some time entertained implacable hatred against one Picket, a cooper, and to satiate my revenge, though the poor man was entirely innocent of the fact laid to his charge, I swore it upon him, and appeared on evidence against him at the Old Bailey, for which wicked crime I hope God will forgive me for thirsting after innocent blood.'"

Such an incident as this swearing away a man's life is

very heroic, and we commend it to the novelist who can dish it up in a most romantic way; as has been done with other crimes. Even his sworn friend is betrayed by Everett. When taken up, he thinks it "better to hang twenty than get squeezed myself; so after some reluctancy, I impeached my fellow man, Richard Bird. I was brought safe to Chelmsford gaol, where I appeared as evidence against my fellow man. He was capitally convicted, and suffered accordingly."

The poor cowardly shifts, the meanness, the dirt and misery of these poor wretches are seen very well in the original Old Bailey Sessions papers. In proving the chain of life, how one animal depends on another, nay, often feeds on it, a professor the other day quoted Dr. Swift's well-known verse:—

> Big fleas have little fleas
> Upon their backs to bite 'em;
> And little fleas have still less fleas,
> And so *ad infinitum*.

The wretched highwayman had around him more wretched accomplices—horrible women, who often betrayed him,—Jews, informers, publicans, and a whole tribe of harpies. He himself was often only the creature of the thief-taker, who, for mere blood-money, would put him up to a robbery, inform against him, and hang him in due course. This was well understood by Jonathan Wild's gang, and constantly peeps out in the old trials.

We have filled so much space in stripping the lace off

the highway, that we have little to say about the philosophic robber or murderer of Sir E. L. Bulwer Lytton. A more monstrous creation never proceeded from any brain. Horace's maxim is outraged. A man commits a murder —a low, brutal, cowardly murder—and Sir Edward thus defended it:—"The burning desires I have known—the resplendent visions I have mused—the sublime aspirings that have lifted me so often from sense and clay: these tell me, that whether for good or ill, I am a thing of immortality, the creature of a God . . . . . [After this profanity follows the excuse]. I have destroyed a man noxious to the world! with the wealth by which he had afflicted society I have been the means of blessing many."

Can the folly and wickedness of perverted imagination go further? Well may one of our satirists say, parodying the baronet's style:—"I would not have this doctrine vulgarly promulgated, for its general practice *might chance to do harm.* Think what would be the world's condition, were men without any Yearning after the Ideal to attempt to Re-organize Society, to re-distribute Property, and to Avenge Wrong."

Quitting satire, and remarking that every boy, in some sort or another, does truly worship the heroic, can we imagine what amount of harm must have been done by placing before youth the robber and the murderer as heroes, and not only palliating these crimes, but representing them as virtues? To this base literature for how many Robsons and Redpaths is society indebted? Nor have the faults of taste of the higher or richer novelists stayed with them-

selves. Their imitators are, indeed, numerous. From the time when it was first published until now there have been fifteen variations of "Jack Sheppard;" indeed, in one form or another, that book is perpetually reproduced. Hundreds of "Knights of the Road" and "Blueskins" have also appeared, and will appear. In vain the police attest day after day that youthful thieves are arrested with bundles of such literature in their boxes or pockets. The cheap press still teems with the nauseous stuff. We desire to recall this the more forcibly, because by far the cleverest sinner in this way, Bulwer, now by a grateful ministry made Lord Lytton, declares that, from "real or affected ignorance of the morality of fiction, a few critics reiterate the charge of selecting heroes from Newgate or investing murderers with interest" against him, and defends himself in a lofty way, as if he were right and the critics wrong.

THE SPIRIT WORLD AND ITS LITERATURE.

BOOKS CONSULTED.

Apparitions, a New Theory. By Newton Crosland, second edition, revised and enlarged. London: Effingham Wilson. 1856.

Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World, with narrative illustrations by Robert Dale Owen, formerly Member of Congress and American Minister to Naples. London: Trübner and Co. 1860.

Outlines of Ten Years' Investigations into the Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism. By Thomas P. Barkas. London: F. Pitman. 1862.

The Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism. By Robert Southey, Esq., LL.D. A new edition, with notes, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by the Rev. C. Cuthbert Southey, M.A. London, 1864.

THE SPIRIT WORLD AND ITS LITERATURE.*

MARTIN KORKY, a pupil of the astronomer Kepler, is one whose doubt and recantation should be famous. He doubted, in the face of every proof, that the planet Jupiter had four satellites. "The earth," said Martin, "has only one; why should Jupiter have four? I never will concede his four planets to that Italian from Padua." So also the cardinals in full conclave would not concede to Galileo the movement of the earth; and as they were in the strongest place, they tore up his treatises, made him swallow them and recant. He did so, but again asserted; a second time he had to swallow his theses and recant: but, as the old man rose, the celebrated words burst forth, "*E piu si muove!*" He was right, but for being right he had

* Amongst modern books which will eventually become very rare, the literature of the Spirit World is so curious that I have thought it worth while to include this article. It is to be hoped the reader will think with me.

thenceforward to spend his life in prison. The religious conclave never dreamt of conceding that they might have been mistaken, and in this case they were inferior to Martin Korky, who very sincerely repented. "I have taken him again into favour," wrote Kepler to Galileo, "upon this express condition, to which he has agreed, that I am to show him Jupiter's satellites, and he is to see them, and own that they are there."

Presuming every kind of scepticism were as easily laid as that of Martin, it would not do much harm. But Truth, like the Sybil's books, often grows smaller and smaller, whilst still the same price is demanded. God only can know the results of a determined and stupid ignorance which refuses to be taught. The effect of such does not end in only one generation, but, like a circle in the water, which never ceases to enlarge itself, so ignorance and error spread, with this difference—by wide spreading the circle is brought to nothing, while the error increases. Great, however, as is the evil of incredulity, on the other hand the evils of credulity are quite as bad. If we have on one side Scylla, we have on the other Charybdis. We may be in the frying-pan in one; in the other we are surely in the fire. What are we to believe and what to reject? these are the questions; for every age deals in the marvellous, every person is naturally greedy of novelty. The modern world is not unlike that of Athens in the time of the Apostles: people go about seeking what they may wonder at. It is so pleasant to indulge Wonder! Its organ, phrenologists tell us, is close to that of Hope, and the one

excites the other. If the faculty be pleasant, we cannot be surprised at its abuse. We can all talk learnedly about the unknown. Dr. Dash and the Reverend Blank can grow perfectly eloquent upon the glories of the world to come. It does not need the genius of Bunyan, who knew, by the way, when to drop the curtain, to expatiate on the wonders of the shining city! That which we are told eye hath not seen, becomes as familiar to the oily tongue of the eloquent preacher as Regent Street, and as well trodden as Whitechapel; nor can we deny his statements. Wisdom holds her tongue, but fools rush in to describe. The voluble Miss Smith hurries off into ecstasies. "But might we not suppose, dear doctor?" cried one of the class to Dr. Johnson. "Madam," said the honest old thinker, "we may suppose everything, but we *know* nothing." Taken in this light, we may honestly guard ourselves with a little incredulity, and say with the Poet Laureate that

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds;

especially if half, or more than half the creeds are wrong; for we must remember creeds arise and die out as well as other mundane matters. The creeds of some of our early Christian sects have gone as utterly as the worship of Isis, and popular religious delusions have numbered their thousands and hundreds of thousands of adherents, and now are only known from the answers which learned schoolmen thought fit to give to their errors. Religious error is almost immortal; its dissolution before perfect light and

knowledge will synchronize with that of the world; but for that very reason we should guard against it as much as we can; and, if we are ready to crush a budding error, we should be just as ready to help to raise a struggling truth.

Some such remembrances as these are necessary before we enter into the consideration of our subject. It is therefore incumbent upon us to treat this matter firmly, but as wisely as we can, seeing that there are but very few indeed who have not read of the modern assertions, that disembodied spirits have the power of conversing with human beings, that they can make noises, play upon instruments, break flowers and carry them about the room, carry large tables to a great height, lift (as in the case with Mr. Home) a heavy man up in his chair, so that he shall float in the air about the ceiling, pinch people's legs, squeeze their hands, touch their lips, and exhibit their own forms (partially) as to white and dark hands, and (as it is asserted was done at the Tuileries) lift the warm and delicate hand of a disembodied spirit (?) to the lips of an Emperor for him to kiss.

These are very startling facts to assert in the nineteenth century, that boasted epoch of all knowledge. The assertions little more than two hundred years ago would have procured one's condemnation to a death by fire. Fifty years ago the asserter would, had he property, have been consigned to a mad-house. Twenty years ago he would have been laughed at as a dupe, or avoided as a charlatan; to-day he is run after, listened to, applauded, and gains disciples. Amongst a people descendants of our own,

but more acutely nervous, the Spiritualists, as they call themselves, number nearly half a million; and it is said that solemn and keen merchants keep a medium for the purpose of consulting him or her as to their success in business during the day. Certainly the Faith counts upon twenty periodicals in that free land, upon several in our own, and can number amidst its triumphs the production of such a work as the one second on our list, written by a man high in office,—an ambassador, in fact, of a first-rate power. Amongst its most prominent defenders and apostles are men and women of genius—artists, preachers, literary men, (that is, those of the trade of letters,) popular physicians, doctors, empirics, publishers, and lawyers, comic writers, actors, and dissenting ministers. This is strange—certainly stranger than fiction. Whatever the cause may have been, the effect is remarkable.

Now there are three points upon which we can stand. Either all these disciples are liars, and their productions lies and collusions; or, secondly, they are all deceived themselves, but honest victims who deceive others; or, thirdly, the narrations are true, and are worthy of our deep and grave consideration; and, as it appears to us, "Footfalls on the Boundary of another World," one of the most important productions of the body, is written to prove this last.

The way in which Mr. Robert Dale Owen, who, it must be remembered, is the son of our old friend of eccentric memory, Robert Owen, proceeds to establish the

truth of spiritual interference in the matters of this world, is very straightforward and very simple. He asserts, and easily proves his assertion, that we do not know all things; that there are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, and that to declare that certain occurrences do not take place because we understand them not, is narrow and foolish. It is to place the extent of the world at the horizon of our vision. But, as we know there are lands and places beyond our vision, so we know there are matters which surpass our knowledge and our understanding. Our pleader next deprecates the expression of a judgment before we have thought on the matter; for that is simply prejudgment or prejudice. We are not to contradict an assertion because it is strange, but rather, as a stranger, give it welcome. Exposure of an error must come after investigation, never before it. We are told in the Proverbs that "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

To deny actual phenomena is not the proper mode to win over a misled or diseased mind. Nothing can be more true than this. Had we always thus proceeded, we should have far advanced in philosophic inquiry; but we and Mr. Dale Owen must remember that there are many useless semi-philosophic assertions which we can hardly disprove, although we feel that we know that they are false and useless. Many of the opponents of Paracelsus knew that his assertion that he had a familiar spirit in the pommel of his sword was perfectly untrue; but, as they had never seen the sword, they could not disprove it.

When Lord Cochrane brought Lord Gambier to a court-martial, prejudice, ignorance, and incompetence triumphed over valour and knowledge, because the latter could not disprove assertions of the former, and Lord Cochrane lost his case. So also Admiral Byng was shot, while the Crimean blunders were left unpunished.

The deduction from Mr. Owen's candid inquiries is that we should be seekers rather than judges, and that we should accept that which we cannot disprove; and this being conceded, he proves abundantly and easily that spirits and "ultra-mundane," or other-world interferences, have been talked of from the beginning; that every age furnishes many well-authenticated narratives of these appearances; that Scripture does not deny spiritual appearances, but constantly affirms them; that history, sacred and profane, gives instances of them, such as the appearance of Samuel to Saul, Cæsar's wife's (Calphurnia's) dream, and the visit of Cæsar's ghost or wraith to Brutus; and that, as we cannot overthrow the testimony of such a cloud of witnesses, we are bound in honour to accept it as we would accept that of others in a court of law, and therefore believe in spiritual interference. We presume that these arguments have gained for Mr. Owen's book the praise of some contemporary critics, when they say that Mr. Owen's reasons are acute and logical, which we do not deny, that being certainly logical enough, only they simply prove what we already know as surely as that two and two make four. What other churches may say we know not, but every Christian community believes in

spiritual interferences. Our Church and that of Rome constantly affirm it; the New Testament owes its vitality to the assertion. We believe in the orders of angels; we agree that there are innumerable devils; we talk of the host of Heaven, and of the multitude of the damned; we pray against the machinations of the devil or man, and that "as Thy Holy angels do Thee service in Heaven, so they may succour and aid us here on earth." To an educated Christian the possibility of spiritual interference, therefore, is as well known and recognised as the existence of a world of spirits. Mr. Owen is consequently doing a perfectly unnecessary work as regards an English audience when he proves over again a spiritual existence; so far we are with him. We agree entirely as to his premises, but we must await his conclusions before we give him our judgment.

After having set forth his argument, our spiritualist produces his proofs; and these are the gist of the book. They are perhaps the best collection of well-authenticated ghost stories ever written. There is not one, perhaps, which is entirely new, but every single one is entrancing in its interest, and the book deserves to be read, if only for its central portion. There is that narrative of the Wesley ghost, a spirit-rapping which pursued John Wesley's father for years at Epworth rectory, which knocked as loudly in the kitchen "as a huge piece of coal being broken to pieces," which pushed against Wesley's father, and which was heard over and over again by dozens of witnesses, and which used to be called "Old Jeffrey" by

one of the little girls; nay, which would play with her, running and knocking from corner to corner, and which always knocked loudest when the good clergyman's family prayed for the king; the account of this is very succinctly given, and abridged from Doctor Adam Clarke's memoirs of the Wesley family, where it covers forty-six pages. Then there is the story of the Wynyard ghost, that of Neville Norman's murder, and the dream at sea, Count Felkesheim's story of the "Iron Stove," that of Goethe's grandfather, of Mrs. Howitt's dream, and of a very curious dream of the widow of General Torrens antecedent to the Indian mutiny. These, as one will see, are not only old stories—not those of "the oldest aunt telling the saddest tale"—but of well-authenticated (and many modern) ghost narratives, and as such they deserve attention.

While we are quite ready to concede the possibility of spiritual interference in the matters of this world, and have shown this belief to be no new thing, which scarcely needed the heavy lumbering of logical reasoning to prove it, we must at once deny our credence in the common spirits of the day, spirits which appear for no end, or merely to excite vulgar curiosity or village scandal. We cannot admit that the spirit of Shakespeare can be summoned at will to rap out nonsense or verses on the drawing-room table of a grocer at Clapham, nor that the spirit of Washington will be made to utter platitudes about liberty in the back room of a store in New York. If spirits are summoned from the vasty deep, they must come for more than that. We

must remember that the recognised spiritual appearances were all for some evident purpose which they accomplished —that they all took place at some crisis in the world's history. The appearance of the apparition to Saul, the waking up of the dead at Jerusalem at the crucifixion, that solemn warning which Brutus had—all have left their marks on the world's history. The few other authenticated appearances throughout past ages have only been sufficient to keep alive the faith in the immortality of the soul, and Christians of every denomination have been quite justified in believing that since the times of the Apostles spiritual interference in worldly matters has ceased. Indeed the Founder of Christianity himself gave the death-blow to ghostly revelation. Nothing can be more plain than his declaration of the inutility of such; and, as usual, the teachings of the highest intelligence will be found consonant with common reason, common experience, and common sense. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the rich man in torments is represented still clothed in his fancied superiority, but touched with pity for his own kin, begging Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brethren. But the spiritual re-appearance on earth of the beggar at the rich man's beck and call is strictly forbidden.

It is useless to warn people by spiritual interference. "They have Moses and the prophets; if they hear not them, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." We cannot doubt this Divine dogma. The dead, if commonly and often appearing, would and could have no power over us; and if appearing to one, why not

to another? Why should not each have a special revelation? Some of our north country families have an especial spirit, some of the Irish their own banshee. Why should not each family, rich and poor, keep its own ghost? This would be the common deduction. To the Spiritualists it is the *reductio ad absurdum;* and the ghosts, too, might have a word in it. They might say with Bulwer, in *The Caxtons,* "The kingdom of the dead is wide—why should the ghosts jostle us?" Why, indeed? Yet they have jostled us, and are continually doing so in print, and have "jostled" the peace of many a private family away, and as many hundreds into madness. The commencement of this is worth inquiry; the time of it is remarkable. It is nothing less than in the very centre of the nineteenth century, an era of boasted civilisation and progress. The spirits first rapped in 1848, about the same time when Odillon Barrot, Ledru Rollin, and Louis Blanc were rapping down the throne of Louis Philippe, and three years before the century, culminating in the glory of the Exhibition of 1851, became over-glorious of its own progress and advancement. That Exhibition, like the numbering of the people, made us conscious of our own strength. We took stock of what we knew, and fancied that we knew everything. We had machines of all kinds, from the steam hammer to the cradle-rocking machine, and the sewing apparatus to the expanding man. It was a grand apotheosis of human intellect; but in the midst of our natural congratulations and bragging, those who did not believe in progress could point to great folly, and show us

that, much as we had done, the weakness of superstition had not yet died out of the mind of man; and that, amidst believing Christians and philosophic materialists, whilst Stephenson was bridging space, and Faraday resolving the elements, there were those who were as ready to believe in a senseless Fetishism—if we may so term it—as any woolly-headed negro in St. Kitts.

Acting on the already existing belief in spiritualism, or duped by some designing persons, a poor family in an obscure village in America was the first to promote the new schism, which has since distracted thousands. A small farmer, Mr. John D. Fox, resided in a wooden dwelling not far from Newark, in the county of Wayne, State of New York. The house is "a storey and a half high," whatever that may be. Mr. Fox was married, and had a family; his wife and wife's sister were dreamers, and had visions. Soon after they had taken the house in January 1848, they heard rappings, like the hammering of a shoemaker; sometimes the door was shut with a slam, or a hand was laid upon the persons of people, and chairs were moved. Altogether the members of this excitable family were not very pleasant people to live with. The children cried out that a dog was lying on them, but it was gone before the mother could see it. Mr. Fox rose every night, but could not find out the ghost; and so the matter continued for about four months, when Kate Fox, "a lively child," cried out as she snapped her fingers, "Here old Splitfoot, do as I do!" The knocking instantly responded. That was the very commencement, says Mr. Owen,

solemnly; who can tell where the end will be? Where, indeed, of this flood of nonsense? The lively child and the family also hit upon the method of the alphabet, and the ghost spelt out its name, and the letters inferred, or the Foxes did for them, that the spirit's name was Charles B. Rosma, that he (or it) was a pedler, who had been murdered by Mr. Bell, a former occupant, and buried in the cellar.

This was pleasant for Mr. Bell; and a servant girl came forward and confirmed the statement that a pedler called, but that she had been sent out of the way for the night. The cellar was dug up, but nothing was found but about three bones, one of a skull, two from the hands; but these might have been bones found, as they are everywhere, on the banks of a river. Mr. Bell came forward with an attestation of his character, signed by forty people, nearly all in Hydesville, that he was incapable of such a crime, and so nothing came of it. Hundreds of people surrounded the house, as they did the cellar of the Cock Lane ghost, but the spirit would not rap till nearly dark. Books were published about it; the Foxes may be said to have made their fortunes, and were engaged as media, or, as they call them, "mediums," that is, as professional rappers. Mr. Bell left the country with his character in his pocket, and the house has been taken by a farm-labourer, who never hears the raps, lives peaceably, and "does not believe in spooks" (spirits). Such was the lame and impotent conclusion of a Heavenly, or at least spiritual interference. But the news of course spread, and was taken up by hundreds of believers.

It is a pleasant sensation to believe in something new. Hundreds have believed in Joanna Southcott, Thom of Canterbury, and Joe Smith. These prophets have had their martyrs and their victims; the new dogma of spiritual interferences for the slightest purposes, or for no purposes at all, was to have its martyrs also. The first result of the Fox spirits was, that a young pedler, with a waggon and two horses, known to be possessed of several hundred dollars, disappeared. Public opinion at once said he had been murdered. An enthusiastic spiritualist had the surmise confirmed by raps. Through the same medium the credulous inquirer was told where the body lay in the canal. Several spots were dragged, but to no purpose. The dupe's wife was required to go to the same spot, where she nearly lost her life; but some months after the alleged victim reappeared. He had departed secretly to Canada, to avoid his creditors, and by cheating them, had made capital out of the new belief. It does great credit to Mr. Owen to state that he frequently in his book brings forward these matters against the creed, as well as instances in its favour.

The spirits were soon everywhere rampant, and people of a nervous and excitable temperament, those who could be easily acted upon by mesmerism, and put into a state of coma or mesmeric sleep, were found to be the media. The most enthusiastic believers in them have never denied that the spirits told an enormous number of lies. They also exhibited an alarming state of ignorance. Shakespeare writes nonsense verses when in the spirit, Bacon makes

monstrous mistakes; Plato talks the veriest commonplaces, and Cicero is not eloquent. Had any great man departed, his spirit was at once summoned. Fathers called up through these media the spirits of their lost children, mothers conversed by rapping with their daughters, children with their parents, husbands with their wives. Did anything happen to be revealed or guessed at, at all consonant with truth, a great fuss was made, and the fact published far and wide; was nothing evolved or anything mistaken, and falsehoods alleged, it was said that the "spirits" were not in a good humour, or that they purposely deceived.

Mr. Owen quotes some pertinent lines, which show us how far they were to be credited. They are in the form of a remonstrance with the spirits:—

> If in your new estate you cannot rest,
> But must return, oh! grant us this request:
> Come with a noble and celestial air,
> And prove your titles to the names you bear;
> Give some clear token of your heavenly birth;
> Write as good English as you wrote on earth;
> And, what were once superfluous to advise,
> Don't tell, I beg you, such egregious lies.

But, in spite of lies and mistakes, the number of disciples every day grew larger, and the printing press was called in to expand the doctrine. It must be said, greatly to the honour of the press and the pulpit, that both have written and preached against the folly; but there were many not proof against the tickling vanity of wishing to believe. And many disappointed and second-rate writers and preachers went over to the camp of Rappers. In England,

as well as the rest of the world, they made head-way. Tables were turned, keys and Bibles flew about the room; and, if testimony is of any value, men were lifted up and carried to the ceiling, spirit hands plucked flowers, composed tunes, and played them; painted pictures of Heaven's flowers, read books through their covers, and two years after Sir John Franklin's death, a clairvoyant medium described him as alive and well, but very sad, sitting with his companions on the ice! We now know how true that was.

To sum up all, we may add that now spirit-rapping seems as lively as ever. In our own circle of friends we number many believers, but they one and all add that they do not see any use in the creed. The raps are supra-mundane, and therefore not likely to be put to worldly use. There are many media in London, but they are generally illiterate, and will not perform—or the spirits will not—till after dusk! They live on the credulity of the incredulous; for it must be added that the majority of educated spiritualists were religious sceptics before they grasped at this shadow. The unbelievers in the matter seem divided as to the character of these raps, some holding that they are the work of the devil, others that they are all a sham and a delusion. The plain, straightforward Christian is prepared and forearmed in either case. He cannot believe that the souls of the departed can be called up to entertain a party of ladies in a drawing-room, or of curious nobodies in a public-house tap-room, nor that a divinely-visited woman, like Mrs. Marshal, would be permitted to let out

her inspiration for ten shillings a night, and while delivering the very oracles of Heaven, would speak bad English. Mr. Barkas, whose book is the most philosophical, and whose enquiries seem to have been the most regular and properly disciplined of those of any one spiritual writer, holds that the phenomena result from a very low form of diabolism. This is conceding part of their claim, and this concession we are unwilling to make. If it be necessary that spirits should manifest themselves, we can wait till the matter culminates, and believe it possible when it does do so. Till then we can rest upon our own creed, firmly convinced that in this doctrine of playing with a future state there is but one step from the sublime to the wicked and ridiculous, and that the Rappers have taken it; for very surely, if we may judge of immortality from the manifestations made public, our souls must revolt thereat, since, if they be true, death is degradation.

THE END.

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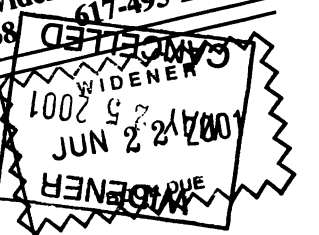

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